

394 20  
THE  
CANTERBURY  
TALES  
OF  
CHAUCER,

Modernis'd by several Hands.

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Publish'd by Mr. OGLE.

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VOL. III.

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A

# LETTER to a FRIEND,

WITH THE

## Poem of *Gualtherus* and *Griselda*.

Dear M\*\*\*\*\*

**I**F your more serious Occupations of the Law have not intirely habituated your Mind to a full Contempt, and strong Dislike, of all lighter Studies; (the Case of many grave Practitioners of the Bar) permit Me to indulge the Hopes of Furnishing You with Matter for the Amusement of an idle Hour. Was my Ability, to entertain You, equal to my Inclination, there is None, that would turn his Thoughts with greater Cheerfulness to that End; as indeed, there is None, that can owe You greater Obligations. In Me, it would be no more than a grateful Acknowledgment, to give You some Hours of Relaxation, after the many Days of Trouble I have given You, on Affairs not to be mentioned in this Place. But All I can pretend to offer of that Kind, will, I fear, rather require your further Favor and Indulgence. However, like some unfortunate Client, who (by worse Advice, than You would give Him) has embark'd in a desperate Suit; as I am already in, I must go on, let Me get out as

well as I can. I would even compound to hear, that the Subject might tempt your Perusal on some vacant *Saturday*; or that it had filled up the Void (for it is not immoral) of some rainy *Sunday*; at least, that it had been dipped into between the *Terms*; or that perhaps it had been finished during the long *Vacation*.

I can even figure You to my Mind (allow Me here a little Poetical Licence) opening this Packet, on the first Receipt, with the Face of a kind and solicitous Friend; I can imagine, that I see You in Expectation of Finding inclosed the Draught of some enormous Bill; and can almost hear You say (thinking aloud). This must be *O---*, *Heir at Law, Plaintiff*, against *W---*, *Doctor in Divinity, Defendant*. I can paint You, under no little Surprise, when after having turned to the Title-Page, You discover the Contents to be no more than some idle Reports from *Parnassus*; and when You meet with the Name of *Grizilda*, I can conceive You, not without Concern, reflect; that any Man of Common-Sense should waste his Time, and Study on Reviving an old Nursery-Ballad!

But it will never be your Practice, to condemn, unheard. Let Me therefore first put in my Plea. The Courts of *APOLLO*, as well as those of his Sister, your Patroness, are ruled by Authorities and Precedents. The Students of *PARNASSUS* are not without their poetical *Coxes*, on poetical *LIT- TLETONS*; and tho' not always to the Purpose (as may happen sometimes at another Bar) They will argue as loud, and as strenuously insist, on the Precedents and Authorities of Such, as have been esteemed most Learned in their Laws (for Instance,  
on

on the Reports of a BOCCACE, a PETRARCH, or a CHAUCER,) as my ingenious Friend on the Reports of a HOLT, a HALE, or a LUTWYCHE. Then thus I state my Case.

Such of the Readers of this Poem, as may not happen to be conversant with the Authors, by Whom the Story of GRISELDA and GUALTHERUS has been invented, amplified, or improved, may think it not unsatisfactory to receive such Information as can be got, either from Inquiry, or Conjecture.

I am apt to imagine, that this Story had some Foundation in History; but that passing thro' the Hands of Monkish Writers (such as was our own GEOFFREY of MONMOUTH) the Obstinacy of GUALTHERUS, and the Patience of GRISELDA, have been highly illumined, if not greatly exaggerated; and that thence Rising, from the Probable to to the Marvelous, the Subject pass'd to some PROVENÇAL Bard; which Language, after a long Age of Ignorance, was esteemed the most polish'd of all the Modern. Hence, as I suppose, the Story came down to BOCCACE; Who, modelling it a-new, inserted it as the Last and Best of the Tales in his DECAMERON. Higher, than BOCCACE, We are not able to trace it, tho' We may well suppose its Original is higher; for BOCCACE, it is well known, was rarely the Inventor, tho' always the Improver, of the Stories he relates. It was either from an Error of the Press, or Inadvertency of the Revisor, from a Failure of Memory, or Haste of Transcribing, that We find these Words in Mr. DRYDEN's Preface to his Fables, "*The Tale of GRIZZILD* "*was the Invention of PETRARCH, by Him sent to*



“**BOCCACE**; from Whom it came to **CHAUCER**.” Mr. **DRYDEN**, who is rarely guilty of Mistakes of this Kind, undoubtedly meant to say, “*That this Story was the Invention of BOCCACE, by him sent to PETRARCH, from whom it came to CHAUCER.*” For that is the Fact; and it is for this Reason, that the **LATIN** Letter from **PETRARCH** to **BOCCACE**, which inclosed his Translation, is here subjoined at the End of this Letter. The Inquisitive, I imagined, might not be displeased with the Perusal of that Letter; especially, as it is only to be found in the Collection of that Author’s Compositions in **LATIN**; Which become every Day more rare, and are to be seen only in the Hands of the Curious.

In this Letter, **PETRARCH** acknowledges to **BOCCACE**, that He had long before received a Copy of his **DECAMERON**; and strait apologizes, for having but lightly perus’d it; He only rode Post thro’ it, as He confesses (*festini viatoris in morem*) a Negligence arising, partly from his own private Occupations, and partly from the public Distractions of the Times. However, the Last of the Tales, of a Turn (says **PETRARCH**) very different from Many that precede, wholly engaged and ingrossed Me. He affirms, that He could not forbear Reading it, till He had got it by Heart; and This at a Time, when He was so compass’d with Cares either public or private, that He had almost forgot himself. He took that Method (as He adds) not only for the Amusement of his own Thoughts in Private, but for the Entertainment of his Friends in Company; with Design to repeat the Story, with more Ease and Advantage, whenever the Turn of Conversation might

might permit him to introduce the Subject. Having found by the general Approbation of All who heard it, that He was not singular in his Affection, at last He took up the Resolution of Turning it into LATIN, that the Beauties of it might not lie conceal'd, from Such as were ignorant of the ITALIAN Tongue. But here He hopes his Indulgence, if not his Approbation, for the Liberties He had taken, in Dressing his Thoughts in his own Words, and Making some few Alterations and Additions in the Narration. For He professes to have follow'd that Rule laid down by HORACE:

*Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus  
Interpres :*

All which, whether to the Advantage or Disadvantage of the Poem, or to use his own Expression, *an mutata veste deforma verim, an fortassis ornaverim, tu judica*, He submits to his Judgment; and desires that He will accept of this Dedication which He makes him of his own Work; which, He says, He is at a Loss to know What to call; whether a Fiction or History; and seems \* desirous that Boccace would inform Him, whether He was really the Inventor, or only the Improver of the Story.

After this Prefatory Discourse, the Translation follows; Which, to do Justice to PETRARCH, is,

\* Had the Answer of Boccace to this Letter of PETRARCH been preserved, we might have traced this Story to its Original Source; for want of This, we can only rely on the most probable Conjecture.

thro' the Whole, much amplified, and much improved. He likewise begins it with a fuller Description of the Country of SALUZZO, and concludes it with an ampler Moral, than BOCCACE. CHAUCER, to Whom this Story came from PETRARCH, retains his Moral, but throws the Description into the CLERK of OXFORD's Prologue; He adds his Reason for it: which I shall the rather transcribe, in order to give the modern Reader a Specimen of his Language.

*But for to tellin of this worthie Man,  
That taught me this Tale as I first began;  
I say that he first with hie Stile inditeth,  
(Ere he the Bodie of his Tale writeth)  
A Probeme, in the whiche descriveth he  
PIEMONT, and of SALUCE the Country,  
And spekith of APPENNINE Hillis hie,  
That ben the Boundis of West LOMBARDIE,  
And of Mount VESULUS in speciale,  
Whereas the Po out of a Welle smalle  
Ytakith his first Springing and his Sours,  
That Estewarde ev're encrefith in his Cours  
To EMELLEWARD, to FERARE, and VENISE,  
The whiche a long time werin to devise,  
And truly, as to my Jugement,  
Methinkith it a thing impertinent,  
Save that him liste so convey his Matere, &c.*

But to return to PETRARCH. After his Translation, follows a Sort of Postscript, or Continuation of his Letter, which the Editors of his LATIN Works have not sufficiently distinguished from the Story. Here PETRARCH again renews the Doubt  
He

He intimated before, whether this Story of BOCCACE, which he had taken the Pains to translate, was truly historical, or merely fictitious. But waving the Argument, He proceeds to tell Him, what Effect the Perusal of it had on Some of his particular Friends. He says, that He submitted it to the Judgment of an Acquaintance at PADUA, Whom He commends, as a Man of Note and Genius, *vir altissimi ingenij, multiplicisque notitiæ*. That this Person had barely gone half way thro' it, when He was prevented by a Flood of Tears; that after a short Pause, He resumed it again, but with all his Recollection was not able to proceed: That upon This, He declined the Rest, and put the Copy (meaning that of the Translation) into the Hands of One of his Companions, a Person of Letters, whom He intreated to finish the Story. I took This, adds PETRARCH, as an Instance of his great Good-nature, for in the whole Circle of my Acquaintance, I never knew a Man of more Humanity. Between his Desire and Incapacity of Proceeding, He repeated these Lines of the Poet by Way of Apology.

---

*molliſſima corda*

*Humano generi dare ſe natura fatetur ;*  
*Quæ lachrymas dedit, hæc noſti : pars optima ſenſus.*

From this Abstract of PETRARCH's Letter to BOCCACE, it plainly appears, that PETRARCH's Tale of GRISELDA and GUALTHERUS is a Translation in LATIN, from that firſt published in ITALIAN by BOCCACE. How CHAUCER came to take it up at a third Hand, that is, after BOCCACE  
and



and PETRARCH, is our next Subject of Inquiry. And here let Me first observe, that PETRARCH was so delighted with the Story, that He got it by Heart, with a View of Repeating it in Company, for the Entertainment of his Friends. This, He seems to say, was his constant Method; and hence it may be concluded, that He had repeated it to Many, and might have repeated it to CHAUCER. At last He resolv'd, for the Benefit of Those, who were not conversant in the ITALIAN, to turn it into a Language more lasting and universal, with an Intention to perpetuate the singular Beauties He found in that Story, to all Men of Letters. After having mentioned what happened to his Friend at PADUA, He talks a little lower, in the same Epistle, of having showed it to a Friend at VERONA; of All which, I make no other Use than to show, that PETRARCH was so taken with the Design of this Tale, that as well before, as after He had translated it, He made it his usual Custom to communicate it to his Friends; and among These I may venture to name CHAUCER. This last Assertion may seem to require some Proof.

Here give Me Leave to observe, that CHAUCER had no sooner quitted the University, than He went early abroad on his Travels. He was even of an Age, at his Return, to enter himself (As We now say) of the TEMPLE. After This, He got Footing at Court; and after That, He not only cross'd the Seas again, but was absolutely intrusted by EDWARD III. with several foreign Negotiations; and Some of These, which makes more particularly to our Subject, were even in ITALY. Let Us first grant, that there is a possibility the two Poets,  
the



the ENGLISH and the ITALIAN, were not unknown to each other, when CHAUCER went first Abroad; Add to This, that CHAUCER is said to have attended the Duke of CLARENCE at his Marriage with the Daughter of the Duke of MILAN, where PAULUS JOVIUS directly says PETRARCH was present. This was in the Year 1368, the 43d of the Reign of EDWARD III. And let us give further Allowance, for the Embassy, on which CHAUCER was afterwards sent, in the 46th Year of the same Reign, to treat with the Doge and Senate of GENOA; This supposed Acquaintance will then seem not improbable. And I must further observe, that the Date of PETRARCH's Letter to BOCCACE is in the Year 1373, subsequent to CHAUCER's last Embassy to ITALY. From all which, I hope you will indulge Me with one Conjecture; if I should presume that the Person of so much Humanity, whom PETRARCH mentions to have seen at PADUA, may be taken for our very CHAUCER. I think the Words which CHAUCER puts into the CLERK of OXFORD's Mouth are good Grounds for the Suggestion. For certainly in that Particular our Author seems to hint at Himself; it is his Manner and his Way: He does it more strongly on other Occasions. For according to this Scheme, He never supposes himself the Author, but Relator of the Tales. This is the Passage.

*I wolle you telle a Tale, whiche that I  
Learnid at PADOW of a worthy Clerke,  
As prev'd is by his Wordes, and by his Werke.  
He is now dede, and nailid in his Cbest,  
I praye to God to send his Soul good Rest!  
Frauncis Petrarche, the Laureate Poete, &c.*

By

By What has been said, it is evident, that this Tale, take it either as a Fact of History, or as a Fiction of Fable, has already pass'd thro' the Hands of BOCCACE, PETRARCH, and CHAUCER; that is, thro' the Hands of three Men of as great Genius as ever appear'd in one Age. BOCCACE may be suppos'd to have improved on Those He followed; PETRARCH most certainly improved on Him; and our Countryman undeniably improved on them Both. At the same Time that I say This, I must ingeniously confess, that tho' upon the Whole, I give the Preference to CHAUCER's Manner of Treating this Story, yet, here and there, I thought He had omitted some Beauties discernible in PETRARCH; and still think, there are Others remaining in BOCCACE, which PETRARCH has omitted. I have compared Them, One with the Other; and have endeavour'd to glean after Them, and found Occasion rather to add than to diminish. So that should You pronounce Me guilty on the Whole, I hope You will not condemn Me for Sins of Omission. Tho' CHAUCER was my chief Guide, I could not forbear Consulting the other Two; And if by this Method the Story has receiv'd any Improvement, I will fairly acknowledge (to apply with Justice, what a great Writer on a like Occasion said out of Modesty) That, I could have done Nothing without their Assistance; That, *Facile est inventis addere*, is no great Commendation; and That, I am not so vain as to think I deserve a greater.

I shall not trouble You here with any Account or Defence of this Kind of Translation; Mr. DRYDEN has sufficiently established the Use and Advantage of  
of

of it, as far as it regards the modern ENGLISH Reader; But What is of greater Prevalence and Force, than Any Argument, He has proved and demonstrated it, by his own Practice and Example. For I hold Mr. DRYDEN to have been the first, Who put the Merit of CHAUCER into its full and true Light, by Turning Some of the *Canterbury Tales* into our Language, as it is now refined, or rather as He himself refin'd it. This great Man, (Whom I know to be your Favourite, and therefore I will shelter myself the rather under his Authority) assures Us, that He was imbolden'd the more to this Undertaking, as He found, He had a Soul congenial to CHAUCER, and that He had been conversant in the same Studies. It is certain Mr. DRYDEN was every way qualified to say so much, for He has most happily acquitted Himself of his Charge. And I cannot forbear Adding, in due Veneration of that excellent Author, that it seems to Me a Point, not easy to determine; in What his chief Excellence consisted: whether in the Talents of Criticism, or Poetry; None, I think, will venture to say, that his Judgment was inferior to his Wit.

Treating of CHAUCER (Whom He puts on a Footing of Comparison in some Instances with OVID) He observes; that, among other Excellencies, He was perfect Master of the Manners; under which Name are to be comprehended the Passions, and in a larger Sense, the Descriptions of Persons, and their very Habits. For Instance, I see, says Mr. DRYDEN, as distinctly before Me all the Pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*, their Humours, their Features,

Features, and their very Dresses, as if I had supp'd with Them at the *Tabard* in *Southwark*.

This Consideration might lead Us into a large Field of Observation, were We to extend it, from a Survey of the Persons introduced as Relators merely of the Tales, to an Examination of the various Tempers and Manners of Mankind, as We find them more expressly delineated in the ampler Designs of the Tales these Persons are made to relate. To compare his Characters with his Tales; His Characters, are but Sketches of single Pieces in Miniature. His Tales, are complete Compositions at full Length. At present, I shall confine myself singly to his lesser Draughts, I mean his Characters of the Pilgrims; and These He touches with a Hand so masterly; that Mr. DRYDEN does not scruple to say, that they comprise, in one Assemblage, the Pictures of our Fore-fathers and Grand-dames, just such as They were in the Days of CHAUCER. He adds, that their general Characters are still remaining in Mankind; and that They may be found in ENGLAND in these Times; tho' They may be called by other Names than those of Monks, and Friars, and Canons, and Lady Abbesses, and Nuns. For human Kind (says He) is ever the same; and Nothing is lost out of Nature, tho' every Thing may be changed.

As to the Point of Characterizing, in which CHAUCER was most singularly happy; You can name no Author even of Antiquity, whether in the Comic or in the Satiric Way, equal, at least superior, to Him. Give Me Leave, only to throw together a few Touches taken from his Descriptions of the Pilgrims. The *Knight*, or *old Soldier*; Who,  
tho'



tho' that He was *worthy* (meaning a Man of excessive Bravery) yet was *wise* ! The *Squire* ; with Locks curl'd, just *fresh* from the *Press* ! The *Squire's Yeoman* ; so *smartly* equip'd in his *Coat* and *Hood of Green* ! The *Lady Priorefs* ; Who *wept* if She saw a *Mouse* taken in a *Trap* ! The *Monk* ; a *bold Rider*, Who had *many* an able *Horse* in his *Stable* ! The *Frier* ; Who so *sweetly* heard *Confession*, and whose *absolution* was so *pleasant* ! The *Merchant* ; Who *reason'd* so *solemnly*, showing always the *Increase* of his *Winning* ! The *Clerk of Oxford* ; Who was a *great Philosopher*, yet had but *little Gold* in his *Coffer* ! The *Frankelin*, or *Country Gentleman* ; of *sanguine* Complexion, whose *Table dormant* stood always *ready cover'd* in his *Hall* ! The *Haberdasher*, with the rest of the *London Cits* ; whose *Intellects* and *Shapes* pronounced Them Each, an *Alderman* ! The *City Cook*, that attended the *Motions* of the *Former* ; Who *well* could *know* a *Draught of London-Ale* ! The *Shipman*, or *Sailor* ; Who *rode* as *well* as He *could* ! The *Wife of Bath* ; Who *knew* so much of the *good old Dance* ! The *good Parson* (this Character I am sure You must recollect, for it has been most beautifully moderniz'd by Mr. DRYDEN) Who was so *mortified* and *poor*, for He was *pious* and *learn'd* ! The *Plowman*, Brother to the *Parson* ; Who *labour'd* hard to pay his *Dues* ! The *Miller* ; Who *knew well* to *steal Corn* ! The *Manciple*, or *Treasurer of the Temple* ; so *wise* in *buying Vittaille*, that He got a *good Estate* ! The *Reve*, or *Country Steward* ; that could *much better* purchase than his *Lord* ! The *Somner*, or *Apparitor* ; Who had got a few *School Terms of Latin* by *Rote*, which He *vended* like a *Parrot* ! The *Pardoner* ; with a *Pillow-bear*, made of our *Lady's Veil* ! a *Remnant of the Sail* of



*Saint Peter's Boat ! And a Viol full of Pigs Bones,*  
 which he *sold* for the *Relicks* of *Saints ! The Can-*  
*non ; with Head dropping like a Still ! and the Can-*  
*non's Yeoman ; with a double Wallet on the Crupper*  
*of his Horse ! To conclude, the Doctor of Physic ;*  
 whose *Study* was *little* in the *Bible ! And the Ser-*  
*jeant at Law ; Who seemed much busier than he*  
*was !* All these, I say, are the Strokes of no com-  
 mon Genius, but of a Man perfectly conversant in  
 the Turns and Foibles of human Nature. Ob-  
 serve but his Manner of Throwing Them in, and  
 You will not think I exaggerate, if I say, these  
 Turns of Satire, are not unworthy of PERSIUS, JU-  
 VENAL, or HORACE himself. Before I cool upon  
 this Subject, I shall venture (as far as the Ludicrous  
 may hold Comparison with the Serious) to rank  
 our CHAUCER with whatever We have of great-  
 est Perfection in this Character of Painting ; I shall  
 venture to Rank Him (making this Allowance) ei-  
 ther with SALLUST or CLARENDON ; Who in His-  
 tory are allowed to have been the greatest Masters  
 of the Picturesque ; I mean the best Drawers of  
 Characters. Even here some Criticks will not al-  
 low that the Persons, so described, are always con-  
 sistent with themselves, at least that their Actions  
 are always conformable to the Characters given of  
 Them by their Historians ; they will never be able  
 to lay that Charge to CHAUCER. A Fault, how-  
 ever, more applicable to CLARENDON than to  
 SALLUST.

For it was not to the Distinguishing of Charac-  
 ter from Character, that the Excellence of CHAU-  
 CER was confin'd ; He was equally Master of In-  
 troducing them properly on the Stage ; and after  
 having introduced them, of Supporting them a-  
 greedably to the Part They were formed to person-  
 ate.

ate. In This, He claims equal Honour with the best Comedians; there is no Admirer of PLAUTUS, TERENCE, or ARISTOPHANES, that will pretend to say, CHAUCER has not equally, thro' his *Canterbury Tales*, supported his Characters. And all must allow, that the Plan, by which He connects and unites his Tales, one with another, is well designed, and well executed. You will not think it Loss of Time, if I enter into it, so far as may be requisite to our present Subject.

The Scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* is this. CHAUCER pretends, that intending to pay his Devotions to the Shrine of THOMAS A BECKET, He set up his Horse at the *Tabbard Inn* in *Southwark*. That he found in the Inn a Number of Pilgrims, Who severally propos'd the same Journey; and that They all agreed to sup together, and to set out the next Morning on the same Party. The Supper being finished; the Landlord, a Fellow of Sense and Drollery, conformable to his Character and Calling, makes them no disagreeable Proposal. As this Part of CHAUCER has not yet been moderniz'd, You may not be displeased to see as much of it, as may conduce to our present Purpose.

*When now the Rage of Hunger was alay'd;  
And, what more joy'd our Host, our Reck'ning pay'd.  
Thrice welcome (He began) both Great and Small!  
Bright Lords and Ladies fair! Thrice welcome all!  
Full many a Noon has pass'd, full many a Night,  
Since in this Inn appear'd so brave a Sight.  
A braver, never wishe these Eyes to see!  
Such Guests! so full of Honor and of Glee!  
Fain wou'd I raise your Mirth, had I but Skill;  
Or were my Talent, equal to my Will.  
Yet let not the Intent be wholly lost;  
I mean not here to please You at your Cost.*

To Canterbury, -early You proceed;  
 Aid may the blisful Saint your Wisbes speed.  
 But if the Good and Bad You justly weigh,  
 Long must the Road, and tedious seem the Day;  
 For 'tis but dull to travail, you must own,  
 Mute as a Fish, and senseless as a Stone.

Be mine, such luckless Silence to prevent;  
 Attend but my Award with one Consent.  
 For, by my Father's Body, long since dead;  
 Mirth You shall have, at forfeit of my Head.  
 If None, my Wisbe too willfully withstands,  
 In witness of your Minds hold up your Hands!

The Company, without any Reserve, agree to  
 abide by his Decision; upon which Incouragement  
 He lays down the Law in this Manner.

Then thus our Host his Speech renew'd again,  
 The Point, ye Nobles, take not in Disdain.  
 The Road to shorten, and deceive the Day,  
 (For Mirth makes Mirth, and Play gives Rise to Play!)  
 I will; that Each by Turns two Stories tell,  
 Of strange Adventures, which of old befell;  
 One, e'er You reach Saint THOMAS' sacred Shrine;  
 And one, e'er You regain the Talbot Sign.  
 Then further, be it solemnly agreed;  
 That He, that in his Place shall best succeed:  
 Whose Close is held most just, whose Phrase most fit,  
 For Profit or Delight, for Sense or Wit,  
 His be a Supper at the common Cost;  
 Here, in this Host'ry, sitting by this Post.  
 And more, to aid your Sport, myself will ride,  
 And be at once your Governor and Guide;  
 Content, the shar'd Expenses to maintain;  
 Not grutchingly. Such Company is Gain.  
 But first enact; that He that disobeyes  
 My Will, the common Charge, convicted pays.  
 This is my Verdict. E'er We further go,  
 Pass Sentence, One and All! Your Aye, or No!

The Proposal passes *Nemine contradicente*, to the  
 great Satisfaction of the Host.

*Consent*

Consent, from One and All, the Question bore;  
And jointly, as our Host requir'd, We swore.  
Nay more, We vote Him in the Chair of State,  
Sole Umpire of the Tales We should relate.  
Submits in All to follow his Advice,  
We fix a Supper at a stated Price.

Pleas'd was our Host; Success improves Design!  
Pleas'd were the Guests; and loud they call'd for Wine.  
Smooth ev'ry Brow, and easy ev'ry Breast;  
Each took his cordial Draught, and went to Rest.

At Break of Day the Pilgrims set out, and the  
Host obliges them to decide by Lot who should  
tell the first Tale.

Suffice, that on the Knight the Forfeit fell;  
Or were it Chance or Fate. Who knows may tell.  
Nor know We, nor can tell; yet for the Best  
Suppose, it fortun'd. Glad were all the rest;  
As tho' not freed, yet of their Burden eas'd:  
Nor seem'd the noble Knight in Look displeas'd,  
Or griev'd in Thought: The noble Knight was wise;  
Whether Concern be cover'd with Disguise,  
Or from Experience had acquir'd Content,  
For Care is vain, unless it can prevent.  
If then, by Me, the Sport must be begun,  
Thrice welcome Lot (He said) not lost, but won!  
Then, ride and listen (to the Croud, He cry'd)  
And, at the Word, We listen, as We ride,  
While, nor with vulgar Speech, nor Gesture rude,  
This Tale of Love and Honour He pursu'd.

Here follows the Story of PALAMON and AR-  
CITE, which Mr. DRYDEN has so happily mo-  
dernized. The rest of the Pilgrims are summoned  
in their Turns, as the jolly Host pleases to direct.

Thus much I thought necessary to premise, in  
order to show on what Plan the *Canterbury Tales*  
were laid; but I think I must not yet dismiss You,  
before I make You acquainted with the Character  
of the Master of the Ceremonies. Perhaps, on a



Country Journey, You would not disrelish the hearty Salutations of our honest Landlord.

*But to return. Great Joy our Host express'd,  
Thrice heartily He welcom'd ev'ry Guest,  
And goodly Cheer prepar'd with equal Haste;  
(He of two Ills bad rather pray than fast.)  
Nor less, the Plague or Comfort of his Life,  
(Judge as ye list!) his busy-stirring Wife.  
Anon, was Supper serv'd, and neatly dress'd,  
In Season ev'ry Dish, and of the Best.  
Strong was the Ale, with Toast and Nutmeg crown'd!  
Pure was the Wine, and both went briskly round.  
Frank was our Host. A comely Man withal,  
A Marshal fit, for any noble Hall,  
Where many a graceless Page is left in charge.  
Round was his Body, nor more round than large!  
His sturdy Legs, tho' slow, just Measure keep!  
A fairer Burgeess never trod the Cheap!  
Tho' bold of Speech; Yet not more bold than wise!  
His Wits awake, and watchful as his Eyes!  
Loud when He laugh'd! And hearty when He spoke!  
His Voice, was Mirth! His very Look, a Joke!*

Having given You a Sketch of his Plan, as far as it is Introductory to the Tales; I shall add a Word in Regard to his Manner of Interweaving these Tales, the One with the Other; so as to connect Them together, and make, if I may use the Expression, a compleat Body of these separate Parts, all consistent with his grand Design. It was for this Reason, that I thought it necessary to prefix, to the Story of *GRISELDA* and *GUALTHERUS*, the *Prologue* which goes before it in *CHAUCER*, and likewise to subjoin, at the End, the *Moral*, the *Envoy*, and the *Words of our Host*, which follow: this Specimen will sufficiently show his Manner of Connecting the Whole. Between every Tale, something of the same Nature is introduc'd; which leads Us insensibly from one to another, without perceiv-

ing

ing the Transition; a Circumstance that often shocks Us in the Perusal of OVID's *Metamorphoses*, where We cannot always find the Thread that unites one Story with another. Tho' BOCCACE has succeeded better than OVID in this Particular, I think him yet far inferior to our Author: the Characters of HOMER, in the *Iliad*, are not more clearly distinguished, than Those of CHAUCER in his *Canterbury Tales*. Mr. DRYDEN was justly delighted with his Conduct on this Occasion. He must (says He, speaking of CHAUCER) have been a Man of a most wonderful comprehensive Nature, for He has taken, into the Compass of his *Canterbury Tales*, the various Manners, and Humours (as We now call Them) of the whole *English* Nation, in his Age. Not a single Character has escap'd Him. All his Pilgrims are severally distinguished, Each from the other; not only in their Inclinations, but in their very Physiognomies, and Persons. BAPTISTA PORTA could not have describ'd their Natures better, than by the Marks which the Poet gives Them. The Matter and Manner of their Tales, and of their Telling, are so suited to their different Educations, Humours, and Callings, that Each of Them would be improper in any other Mouth. This was the Opinion of the great Mr. DRYDEN, under whose Wing I am proud to take Shelter, like little TEUCER beneath the Shield of AJAX.

For you will not find more Beauty in the Execution of our Author's Tales, than in their Position. At the Entrance of the Poem You have their Characters distinctly drawn, and a Plan of the Comedy in which They stand for the *Dramatis Personæ*. Our Host, from the Beginning to the End, is the Projector and Inliverer of the Whole; He is the *Prologue*, the *Epilogue*, and even the *Chorus* be-

tween the Acts. I call'd him above, a sort of Master of the Ceremonies, he plays the Drole on every Occasion, and acts the Part not only of *Mercury*, but *MOMUS*, in the *Jupiter Tragedian* of *LUCIAN*; or rather like that of *SILENUS* in the *CÆSARS* of *JULIAN*. To exemplify what I mean, I would only desire You to compare the Prologue of the *Clerk of Oxford* with his Character; and his Tale, with Both; You will find Them all of a Piece. The same may be said of every other; But these are most to our present Purpose. The Character is this.

*A Clerk of Oxford next appear'd in Sight,  
 Who spent on Logic many a Day and Night.  
 Lank, as a Rake, the Steed on which He sat;  
 And, Sooth to say, the Man was nothing fat.  
 Of Aspect sober, as of Body lean;  
 Effect of Contemplation more than Spleen.  
 Hollow his Vest, and thread-bare was his Coat,  
 A Youth of Worth, He look'd, tho' not of Note.  
 For He, nor Benefice had got, nor Cure;  
 No Patron, yet so wordly to insure!  
 So dextrous yet, of BODY, or of FACE,  
 To circumvent no Chaplain, with his Grace;  
 Nor fulsome Dedication cou'd He write!  
 Drudge for a Dame, or pander for a Knight!  
 Much rather had He range, beside his Bed,  
 A Score of Authors unadorn'd in red,  
 With ARISTOTLE, Champion of the Schools;  
 To mend his Ways, by Philosophic Rules:  
 Than basely to a Vic'rage owe his Rise,  
 By Courting Folly, or by Flatt'ring Vice;  
 Than flourish like a PREBEND in his STALL:  
 That Way, He held, was not to rise, but fall.  
 Nor wou'd He be the Man, for all his Rent;  
 Nam'd You the Priest of Bray! or Priest of Trent! —  
 One Search of Science, He forgot alone;  
 An useful Search! the Philosophic Stone!*

*Hence*

Hence, tho' his Head much learned Wealth might hold,  
Yet held He, in his Coffer, little Gold.

And late, that Stock a Foreign Journey drain'd,  
Curious to see, what yet of Rome remain'd.  
Not, to the Dead, that He confin'd his Looks,  
The Living, He cou'd read, and Men with Books;  
Yet most on Books, what He acquires, He spends,  
From Care of Parents, or from Love of Friends!

And These, unbound or bound, his Chambers strow,  
A choice Collection, bought for Use, not Show!  
There oft, in Secret, pray'd the grateful Youth,  
For Those, that put him in the Way of Truth:  
That gave the Means, just Precepts to instill;  
Or taught Him to distinguish Good from Ill.  
Thus, grounded well, He studied to proceed;  
And not a Word spoke more than there was Need.

'Twas short or close, sententious or sublime,  
And urg'd with Modesty, and said in Time.  
For to instruct, He rather wish'd, than strove,  
Willing to be improv'd, or to improve!  
Still turn'd to moral Virtue was his Speech;  
And gladly wou'd He learn, and gladly teach!

I was the more inclinable to add this favourable Character of the Clerk of Oxford, because it has been objected by some, that CHAUCER has been most outrageously satirical upon the Clergy. And yet there is another Character of his, equally favourable; You will readily recollect, that I mean that of the good Parson, so well reviv'd by Mr. DRYDEN: which, join'd with this, evidently proves, that the Enmity of CHAUCER was never rais'd against the Modest, the Learned, the Exemplary, and the Virtuous, but against the Impudent, the Illiterate, the Profligate, and Vicious Sons of the Church. His Plan was a Picture of human Nature, with all her Beauties and all her Deformities. It was impossible for Him to omit the Clergy, and yet compleat his Design. In the Age he wrote, These were the



the most striking Figures, some for Virtue, but more for Vice. Accordingly he contrasts Them; indeed the Opposites are not equal in Number, but that was not his Fault; it was the Fault of the Times. The Degeneracy of the Church could furnish Him, but with one *modest Clerk of Oxford*, and one *pious Parish-Priest*, in Opposition, to a *heavy Monk*, an *abandon'd Frier*, a *simple Abbess*, a *knaveish Somner*; a *mountebank Pardoner*, and a *tricking Cannon*. But let Us not call This the Prejudice, but the Justice of the Author.

It may be objected, I must acknowledge, that CHAUCER has been reported to have shown no great Respect for the Clergy, by one Act of Violence, standing upon Record against Him; I mean the Fine laid on Him, for Having beat a *Franciscan Frier* in *Fleetstreet*. The Action, I must confess, was somewhat irreverent; yet might it be extenuated, taken only as an Intemperance of Youth; for CHAUCER was at that Time a Student of the *Temple*; besides that from the general good Opinion We may conceive of the Man, and the general bad Opinion We must conceive of the Religious of those Times, it seems more than probable, that barring the Sanctitude of his Habit, the *Franciscan* might have merited the Treatment.

We should find it however more easy to acquit Him of another Charge, at this Time of Day; viz. that of Having strongly imbib'd the Tenets of *Wickliffe*. For had those Tenets of *Wickliffe* been encourag'd and improv'd; the Laity of England, I make no Doubt, would not have borne so easily and so long the Yoke of Rome; nor would a Reformation in the Church have been postpon'd to the Days of *Henry the VIII*. The Insolence, if not the Treason of THOMAS A BECKET, the Avarice

if not the Extortion of the Conclave, and the Corruption if not the Ignorance of the Clergy, were sufficient Motives to induce every Man of Sense and Virtue to wish and attempt a Change. But this is not a Place to give You a State of the Church, such as it was in CHAUCER's Days. I will only add, that notwithstanding that the Priesthood of that Age was but meanly qualified to execute their own peculiar Function; Yet these were the Men, that found Means to obtrude Themselves into all Places of Profit, or Distinction; They were in Fact not only the Heads of the Church, but the Arms of the State.

Was it necessary, at this Time of Day, to add any Thing, in Order to extenuate the Liberties our Author has taken with the Religious of his Times, a short Survey of the Age in which He liv'd would furnish us with ample Materials; such as would raise the Indignation of every Lover of his Country; and every Advocate for Liberty: Were they but to reflect that it was then in the Power of *one insolent Priest* to overthrow the Measures of *one of the greatest Monarchs* that ever sat on the Throne of England: A Monarch! who had Nothing in View, but the Aggrandisement of his People, and the Suppression of their Enemies! It is a Subject, upon which, I must ingenuously confess, I cou'd run Riot; but I shall here chiefly confine Myself to one Instance; and That, to the Profession my Friend has chose to follow, which if it be not even now fill'd with all that Sagacity, and executed with all that Integrity that He cou'd wish, yet ought We greatly to rejoice, that so much of the Practice and Authority of the Courts of Justice has been wrested out of Ecclesiastic Hands.

To You, as to a Gentleman of the Bar, I would put this Question; How would You bear to see  
(and

(and the Man of Law, whom our CHAUCER introduces as one of the Pilgrims liv'd to see and bear it) An Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Lord Chancellor? The Parson of *Summersham*, Master of the Rolls? Or ten Beneficed Priests, at one Time, Masters in Chancery? I should be glad to know, how the City Council would relish, the Nomination of the Archdeacon of *Northampton* as Chancellor of the *Exchequer*? Of the Parson of *Fenny Stanton*, as of One of the Chamberlains of the *Exchequer*? Or the Dean of *St. Martin's le Grand*, not only as One of the Chamberlains of the *Exchequer*, but Privy-Purse, and Master of the *Jewel-House*, held (as may be suppos'd) in Commendam? Were you to go to Court, how would You digest; The Parson of *Oundle*, as Master of the Wardrobe? A Priest, as Treasurer of *Ireland*? A Prebendary of *St. Martin's*, as Clerk of the Privy Seal? Or a Bishop, of *Bath and Wells*, as Lord Treasurer of *England*? Yet This is but a Sample of the Times, in which CHAUCER liv'd. It is a Subject I could inlarge upon with Pleasure, but that I think it is Time to dismiss You. It must likewise be a grateful Reflection as well to the Laity, as to the Clergy of our Days, to consider how much the Circumstances of Affairs are alter'd and settled for the Better; Now that, by the closer Application of the Former to Temporal Matters, the Latter are left more at Leisure and Liberty to pursue their Spiritual Call. Which Charge, that They may always decently fill, and piously execute, is the sincere Wish, of

Your Obliged Friend,

and Humble Servant,

GEORGE OGLE.

## FRANCISCUS PETRARCHA

## JOANNI BOCCATIO S.

**L**ibrum tuum, quem nostro materno eloquio, ut opinor, olim juvenis edidisti, nescio quidem, unde, vel qualiter, ad me delatum vidi. Nam si dicam, legi, mentiar. Siquidem ipse magnus valde, ut ad vulgus & solutâ scriptus oratione, & occupatio mea major, & tempus angustum erat. Idque ipsum, ut nosti, bellicis undique motibus inquietum, a quibus & si animo procul absum, nequeo tamen fluctuante Rep. non moveri. Quid ergo? Excurre eum, & festini viatoris iam morem, hinc atque hinc circumspiciens, nec subsistens, animadverti Librum ipsum alicubi canum dentibus laceffitum, tuo tamen baculo egregiè, tuâque voce defensum. Nec miratus sum. Nam & vires ingenii tui novi, & scio expertus, esse hominum genus, & insolens, & ignavum, qui quicquid ipsi vel nolunt, vel nesciunt, vel non possunt, in aliis reprehendunt, ad hoc unum docti & arguti, sed elingues ad reliqua. Delectatus sum in ipso transitu, & si quid lascivie liberioris occurreret, excusabat ætas tunc tua, dum id scriberes, stilus, idioma, ipsa quoque rerum levitas, & eorum qui lecturi talia videbantur. Refert enim largiter, quibus scribas, morumque varietate stili varietas excusatur; inter multa sane jocosa & levia, quædam pia & gravia deprehendi, de quibus tamen diffinitivè, quid judicem, non habeo, ut qui nusquam totus inhæserim: at quod verè accidit, eo modo currentibus, curiosius aliquantò quàm cætera, libri principium, finemque perspexi, quorum in altero patriæ nostræ statum, illius scilicet pestilentissimi temporis, quod præ omnibus nostra ætas lugubre, ac miserum mundo vidit, meo quidem iudicio, & narrasti propriè, & magnificè deplorasti. In altero autem historiam ultimam, & multis præcedentium longè dissimilem posuisti, quæ ita mihi placuit, meque detinuit, ut inter tot curas, quæ penè meipsum immemorem fecere, illam memoriæ mandare voluerim, ut & ipse eam animo, quoties vellem, non sine voluptate repeterem, & amicis ut sit confabulantibus, renarrarem, si quando aliquid tale incidisset; quod cum brevi postmodum fecissem, gratamque audientibus cognovissem, subito talis inter loquendum cogitatio supervenit, fieri posse, ut nostri etiam sermonis ignaros, tam dulcis historia delectaret, cum & mihi semper ante multos annos, audita placuisset, & tibi usque adeò placuisse perpenderem, ut vulgari eam stilo tuo censueris, non indignam & sine operis, ubi Rhetorum disciplina validiora, quælibet collocari jubet. Itaque

die



die quodam, inter varios cogitatus, animum more solito discerpentes, & illis, & mihi, ut sic dixerim iratus, vale omnibus ad tempus dicto, calamum arripiens, historiam ipsam tuam scribere sum aggressus, te haud dubiè gavisurum sperans, ultro rerum interpretem me tuarum fore, quod non facilè alteri cuicunque præstiterim; egit me tui amor, & historiæ: ita tamen, ne Horatianum illud poeticæ artis obliviscerer:

*Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus  
Interpres:*

Historiam tuam, meis verbis explicui, imò alicubi aut paucis in ipsâ narratione verbis, aut additis, quod te non ferente modò, sed favente fieri credidi, quæ licet a multis & laudata, & expetita fuerit, ego rem tuam tibi non alteri dedicandam censui. Quam quidem, an mutatâ veste deformaverim, an fortassis ornaverim, tu judica; illinc enim orat, illuc redit, notus iudex, nota domus, notum iter, ut unum & tu noris, & quisquis hæc leget, tibi non mihi tuarum rationem rerum esse reddendam. Quisquis ex me quæret, an hæc verâ sint, hoc est an historiam scripserim, an fabulam, respondebo illud Crispi: Fides penes auctorem, meum scilicet Johannem sit. Hæc præfatus incipio.

**E**ST ad Italiæ latus occiduum Vesulus ex Appennini jugis, mons unus altissimus, qui vertice nubila superans, liquido sese ingerit ætheri, mons suapte nobilis naturâ, sed Padi ortu nobilissimus, qui ejus e latere fonte lapsus, exiguo orientem contra solem fertur, mirisque mox tumidus incrementis, brevi spatio decursu, non tantum maximorum unus amnium, sed Fluviorum a Virgilio Rex dictus. Liguriam gurgite violentus interfecat, dehinc Æmiliam, atque Flaminiam, Venetiamque discriminans, multis ad ultimum & ingentibus ostiis, in Adriaticum mare descendit. Cæterum pars illa terrarum, de quâ primùm dixi, quæ & grata planitie, & interjectis collibus, ac montibus circumflexis, aprica pariter, ac jucunda est, atque ab eorum quibus subjacet Pedemonium nomen tenet, & civitates aliquot, & oppida habet egregia. Inter cætera, &c.

**U**Rât amor tui, ut scriberem senex, quod juvenis vix scrip-  
sissem, nescio an res veras an fictas, quæ jam non Historiæ, sed Fabellæ sunt, ob hoc unum, quod res tuæ, & a te scriptæ erant; quamvis hoc prævidens, fidem rerum penes auctorem, hoc est, penes te fore sim præfatus: & dicam tibi, quid de hac Historiâ, quam Fabulam dixisse malim, mihi contigit.

Legit

Legit eam primùm communis amicus Patavinus, vir altissimi ingenii, multiplicisque notitia; & cùm epistolæ medium vix transisset, subito fletu præventus substitit: post modicum verò cùm in manus eam resumpsisset, firmato animo perlecturus, ecce iterum, quasi ad condictum rediens, lecturam gemitus interrumpit. Fassus itaque se non posse procedere, eam uni suorum comitum, docto satis viro, legendam tradidit. Quod accidens, quorsum alii traherent, incertum habeo, ego in optimam partem traxi, mitissimumque viri animum intellexi: Verè enim homo humanior, quem ego quidem noverim, nullus est. Rediit illo flente, ac legente ad memoriam Satyricum illud:

*mollissima corda*

*Humano generi dare se natura fatetur.*

*Quæ lachrymas dedit, hæc nosti: pars optima sensus.*

Post tempus amicus alter noster Veronensis, sunt enim nobis ut reliqua, sic amici etiam communes, audito quid alteri inter legendum accidisset, eandem legere optavit. Gessi morem ingenioso & amico viro; legit eam totam, nec alicubi substitit, nec frons obductior, nec vox fractior, nec lachrymæ, nec singultus intervenère, & in finem: Ego etiam, inquit, flestem: Nam & piæ res, & verba rebus accommodata fletum suadebant, nec ego duri cordis sum, nisi quòd ficta omnia credidi & credo. Nam si vera essent, quæ usquam mulier, vel Romana, vel cujuslibet gentis hanc Griseldim æquatura sit? Ubi quæso tantus amor conjugalis? Ubi par fides? Ubi tam insignis patientia, atque constantia? His tunc ego nil respondi, ne rem a jocis amicique colloquii festâ dulcedine ad acrimoniam deceptionis adducerem: erat autem prona responsio. Esse nonnullos, qui quæcunque eis difficilia sint, impossibilia omnia arbitrantur, sic mensurâ suâ omnia metientes, ut se omnium primos locent, cùm tamen multa fuerint, fortè & sint, quibus essent facilia, quæ vulgò impossibilia viderentur. Quis est enim, exempli gratiâ, qui non Curium ex nostris, & Mutium, & Decios: ex externis autem Codrum, & Philenes Fratres; vel quoniam de Fœminis sermo erat, quis vel Porciam, vel Hipocrateam, vel Alcestim & harum similes non Fabulas fictas putet? Atqui Historiæ veræ sunt. Et sanè, qui pro alio vitam spernit, quid non spernere, quid non pati possit, non intelligo. Cæterùm & illam, & alteram, duas magnas epistolas ad te non pervenisse nunc sentio: sed quid faciam? Pati oportet, indignari licet, non ulcisci. Apparuit, ecce! per Cisalpinam Galliam tædiosissimum hoc hominum genus, custodes passuum, imo pestis nunciorum, qui literas apertas introspiciant, & moro-

morosissimè contemplentur, quod Dominorum forsàn jussus ex-  
 sat, qui sibi omnium conscii, trepidâ ac superbâ vitâ, de se, & con-  
 tra se omnia dici putant, atque omnia nosse volunt. Illud nihil  
 excusat, quòd si quid in literis ipsis inveniunt, quod aures asininas  
 mulceat; solebant quidam in transcribendo tempus terere, & nun-  
 cios detinere, nunc crescente licentiâ, ut digitis suis parcant, abire  
 illos jubent sine literis, quodque gravissimum tædii genus est, hoc  
 illi maximè faciunt, qui nihil intelligunt: Similes iis, quorum  
 ampla, & præceps gula est, & lenta digestio, qui malæ valetudini  
 proximi sint, oportet. Importunitatem talium nemò me sto-  
 machantior, nullus impatientior, ita ut sæpe me a scribendo di-  
 verterit, sæpe quo scripserim, dolore coegerit, quando contra  
 hos prædones, literarum nulla vindictæ patet occasio alterius,  
 turbatis omnibus, & Reip. libertate pessundatâ. Sanè huic tedio  
 accedit ætas, & lassitudo rerum penè omnium, scribendique non  
 satietas modò, sed fastidium, quibus junctis inducor, ut tibi,  
 amice, & omnibus quibus scribere soleo, quod ad hunc epistola-  
 rem stilum attinet ultimum. Vale dicam, ne usquam in finem  
 me, quod diutius jam fecerunt, à meliori studio scripturæ fra-  
 giliores impediant, quàm ne ad horum nebulonum manus in-  
 eptissimas scripta nostra perveniant, quorum sic saltem ab inju-  
 riis tutus ero, si quando vel tecum, vel cum aliis scripto opus  
 sit, sic scribam, ut intelligar non delecter. Promiseram, me-  
 mini, in quâdam ordinis hujus epistolâ, me deinceps in epistolis  
 brevius scripturum, declivi jam temporis urgente penuriâ, pro-  
 missum implere non valui, multoque facilius, ut intelligi datur, si-  
 lentium cum amicis est, quàm breviliquium; tantus est, ubi se-  
 mel incepimus, ardor colloquendi, ut facilius fuerit non cœpisse,  
 quàm frænare impetum cœpti sermonis. Sed promissum, nonne  
 sat promissum implet, qui plus præstat? Eram credo, dum pro-  
 mitterem, oblitus Catonis illud apud Ciceronem latè notum,  
 “Quod naturâ ipsâ loquacior est senectus.” Valete amici, va-  
 lete epistolæ. Inter colles Euganeos, VI idus Junias MCCCCLXXII.

# PROLOGUE

TO THE

## MERCHANT'S TALE.

By Mr. OGLE.

**W**ELL clos'd! (The Merchant thus applauds  
the Squire)  
Your Tale is full of Fancy and of Fire.

You show, (He adds) to say no more than Truth,

A most surprizing Genius, for a Youth.

To cloath each Image in it's proper Dress,

And to design as well as to express,

Inclines my sober Judgement to preface,

You will not find your Match in riper Age.

If but so long your Thread of Life be spun,

And you persist to end as You begun,

In Glory you must set, (so Heav'n dispose)

Your Future Fate) in Splendor as You rose.



Now by the Holy Trinity I swear,

Blest, cou'd I die this Hour, in such an Heir.

More Blest, than if this Hour I cou'd command

Ten Thousand Marks a-year, in solid Land.

Not that I want—some Fortune I have made—

And all the World esteems me rich in Trade.

But 'tis a Pain to live at large Expence,

For One, that Spirit wants as well as Sense.

Such is my Son! Whom, heartily I hate!

What, is the Man, (quoth I) not what, is his Estate?

It joy'd Me, when I turn'd Him Boy to School;

It griev'd me sore, when He return'd a Fool.

But Scholars flourish thro' a Lucky Sign;

And rare to meet, as Layman or Divine!

Well! Soldier He shall be. I bought Him Lee;

The Rest He had, a Person, and a Face!

And soon He learn'd the Military Art,

And soon He lost his Post, for Want of Heart!

This

This sham'd Me much, and robb'd Me of my Wife;  
 Love of my Youth! And Comfort of my Life!  
 I join'd Him then, my Commerce to attend;  
 He join'd Me, but to dissipate, and spend.  
 Now, that my Turn is Frugal, I admit;  
 Yet I am something gen'rous, for a Cit.  
 Plain as I go, or when I walk, or ride;  
 The Lord, that owes Me Money, gives me Pride.  
 And had I such a Son, as cou'd but write,  
 As Authors wrote; as Soldiers fought, wou'd fight;  
 Cit as I am, that Son I wou'd support. —  
 But Mine, will drink with Footmen of the Court.  
 With Knaves, at Dice, All I cou'd save, wou'd waste;  
 Nor knows one Man of Sense, or Man of Taste.

I doubt, not much is gain'd, (return'd our Host)  
 By that same Sense, and Taste, tho' much is lost.  
 But, *Merchant*, let me mind You of your Tale;  
 My Bill is drawn on Sight! You will not fail.

Not (quoth the *Merchant*) tho' You take Me  
 Suppose it but accepted and indors'd.  
 The *Squire* will well excuse me what was said;  
 I only wish'd my Son, so turn'd, and bred!

In that (rejoin'd our *Host*) the Man is right;  
 But Cits grow tedious, as they grow Polite:  
 The Twine will break, too nicely that You spin.  
 Begin! Enough of this! Enough! Begin! —

The *Merchant*, then. Your Mandate I obey;  
*Sir Host!* I hold you Sov'reign for the Day.  
 Gracious, receive, what humbly is address'd,  
 So pleasing One, I hope to please the Rest.

Yet grant Me, first to wail, if not atone,  
 A greater Ill; a Folly of my own!  
 For Store of Rancor, Malice, Spleen, and Spite,  
 Have I, from ev'ry Morn, to ev'ry Night!

No

*the* MERCHANT'S TALE.

No Peace at Table, and no Rest in Bed!  
The Case of most, so hardy, as to wed;  
For mine, I trow, is not a single Case:  
Ev'n here are More, that wear the Marry'd Face.  
Yet am I One of Those, supremely curst,  
Plague'd with a Wife, of wicked Wives, the Worst!  
Yok'd to the Fiend, the Foremost to rebel;  
My Help-mate wou'd out-devil, the Devil in Hell.  
To blame Her, here or there, wou'd be to wrong  
The Compass of her Temper, or her Tongue!  
Nor This, nor That, her special Vice I call;  
Her, First, or Last! She is a Shrew at All!

Long is the Distance, and the Diff'rence wide,  
'Twixt humble *Grizild*, and my haughty Bride!  
Unfetter'd once, so may I trade and thrive,  
As Nought shou'd teach my Heart again to wive.  
Cage'd, soon as caught in the Connubial Snare,  
We dance one Round of Slav'ry, and of Care.

Who



Who takes a Wife, will find it to his Cost;  
 The Freedom, and the Ease of Life is lost,  
 Try, he that will, the Matrimonial State,  
 This, will He own a Truth, or soon, or late.  
 By holy *Thomas*, the good Saint of *Inde*,  
 Deceitful is the Sex; a slipp'ry Kind.  
 This, of the greater Part, I mean to say;  
 For One-and-All, wou'd be the Devil-to-pay!

Here, shou'd You ask me, my right honest *Host*,  
 How long since I was shipwreck'd on the Coast?  
 With this my Second Choice what Time has past?  
 (Peace to my First of Wives, for this my Last!)  
 How long? You scarce will take it on my Word,  
 Two Months are past, We enter on a Third.  
 For slightly here to touch, not fully paint,  
 This marry'd Fiend of an unmarried Saint,  
 Who caught me with the Farce of Love she play'd,  
 But singly priz'd me for my Stock in Trade;

This

This Scold of Mine, keeps one Eternal Round,  
Sure, never Youth to Age in Wedlock bound,  
In Course of Years indur'd such Noise and Strife!  
Her Lesson of an Hour wou'd marr his Life!

We will not doubt your Word, (our *Host* reply'd.)  
Yet some their Talents in a Napkin hide.  
Now you that are a Master of the Art,  
Conceal not all your Knowledge, but impart.

*Sir*, (says the *Merchant*) 'tis the Thing I mean!  
The Thing You seek; a Matrimonial Scene!  
Not that my proper Farce I will disclose,  
But laugh, as Others laugh, at Other's Woes;  
None but the Fool his own Concern reveals;  
For Who feels Pain for what his Neighbour feels?

*End of the PROLOGUE.*

*January*

This Scold of Mine, keeps one Eternal Round,  
 Sure, never Youth to Age in Wedlock bound,  
 In Counts of Years, indulg'd such Noile and Stile!  
 Her Lesson of an Hour won't mend his Life!  
 We will not doubt your Word, (our Ho's reply'd)  
 Yet some their Talents in a Napkin hide.  
 Now you that are a Master of the Art,  
 Conceal not all your Knowledge, but impart.  
 Sir, (says the Merchant) tis the Thing I meant!  
 The Thing You seek; a Matrimonial Scene!  
 Not that my proper Face I will disclose,  
 But laugh, as Others laugh, at Others' Woes;  
 None but the Fool his own Concern reveals;  
 For Who feels Pain for what his Neighbour feels?

End of the Prologue.

Young

TO : TAM ( 9 )

---

# January and May :

## OR, THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

By Mr. POPE.

**T**HERE liv'd in *Lombardy*, as Authors write,  
In Days of old, a wife and worthy Knight;  
Of gentle Manners, as of gen'rous Race,  
Bless'd with much Sense, more Riches, and some  
Yet, led astray by *Venus*' soft Delights, [Grace,  
He scarce could rule some idle Appetites :  
For long ago, let Priests say what they cou'd,  
Weak, sinful Laymen were but Flesh and Blood.

But in due time, when sixty Years were o'er,  
He vow'd to lead this vicious Life no more,  
Whether pure Holiness inspir'd his Mind,  
Or Dotage turn'd his Brain, is hard to find ;

B

But



10      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

But his high Courage prick'd him forth to wed,  
And try the Pleasures of a lawful Bed.

This was his nightly Dream, his daily Care,  
And to the heav'nly Pow'rs his constant Pray'r,  
Once, e're he dy'd, to taste the blisful Life  
Of a kind Husband and a loving Wife.

These Thoughts he fortify'd with Reasons still,  
(For none want Reasons to confirm their Will.)

Grave Authors say, and witty Poets sing,  
That honest Wedlock is a glorious Thing :

But Depth of Judgment most in him appears,

Who wisely weds in his maturer Years.

Then let him chuse a Damsel, young and fair,

To bless his Age, and bring a worthy Heir ;

To sooth his Cares, and free from Noise and Strife,

Conduct him gently to the Verge of Life.

Let sinful Bachelors their Woes deplore,

Full well they merit all they feel, and more :

Unaw'd by Precepts, human or divine,

Like Birds and Beasts promise'ously they join :

Nor

Nor know to make the present Blessing last,  
To hope the Future, or esteem the Past;  
But vainly boast the Joys they never try'd,  
And find divulg'd the Secrets they would hide.  
The marry'd Man may bear his Yoke with Ease,  
Secure at once himself and Heav'n to please;  
And pass his inoffensive Hours away  
In Bliss all Night, and Innocence all Day.  
Tho' Fortune change, his constant Spouse remains,  
Augments his Joys, or mitigates his Pains.

But what so pure, which envious Tongues will  
Some wicked Wits have libell'd all the Fair. <sup>[spare?]</sup>

With matchless Impudence they style a Wife,  
The dear-bought Curse, and lawful Plague of Life!  
A Bosom-Serpent, a domestic Evil!  
A Night-Invasion, and a Mid-Day Devil!  
Let not the Wife these slanderous Words regard,  
But curse the Bones of ev'ry lying Bard.

All other Goods by Fortune's Hand are giv'n,  
A Wife is the peculiar Gift of Heav'n;

12     *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

Vain Fortune's Favours, never at a Stay,

Like empty Shadows, pass, and glide away ;

One solid Comfort, our eternal Wife,

Abundantly supplies us all our Life :

This Blessing lasts (if those who try, say true)

As long as Heart can wish,--- and longer too.

Our Grandfire *Adam*, e're of *Eve* possess'd,

Alone, and ev'n in Paradise unblest'd,

With mournful Looks the blissful Scenes survey'd,

And wander'd in the solitary Shade :

The Maker saw, took pity, and bestow'd

Woman, the last, the best Reserve of God.

A Wife! Ah, gentle Deities, can he,

That has a Wife e'er feel Adversity ?

Would Men but follow what the Sex advise,

All things would prosper, all the World grow wise,

'Twas by *Rebecca's* Aid that *Jacob* won

His Father's Blessing from an elder Son :

Abusive *Nabal* ow'd his forfeit Life

To the wise Conduct of a prudent Wife :

Heroic

Heroic *Judith*, as old *Hebrews* show,  
Preserv'd the *Jews*, and slew th' *Assyrian* Foe :  
At *Hester's* Suit the persecuting Sword  
Was sheath'd, and *Isr'el* liv'd to bless the Lord.

These weighty Motives, *January* the sage  
Maturely ponder'd in his riper Age ;  
And charm'd with virtuous Joys, and sober Life,  
Would try that Christian Comfort call'd a *Wife*.  
His Friends were summon'd on a Point so nice,  
To pass their Judgment, and to give Advice ;  
But fix'd before, and well resolv'd was he :  
(As Men that ask Advice, are wont to be.)

" My Friends, he cry'd (and cast a mournful  
" Around the Room, and sigh'd before he spoke :) <sup>[Look</sup>  
" Beneath the Weight of threescore Years I bend,  
" And, worn with Cares, am hast'ning to my End ;  
" How I have liv'd, alas ! you know too well,  
" In worldly Follies, which I blush to tell ;  
" But gracious Heav'n has op'd my Eyes at last,  
" With due Regret I view my Vices past ;



14      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

“ And, as the Precept of the Church decrees,  
“ Will take a Wife, and live in holy Ease.  
“ But since by Counsel all things should be done,  
“ And many Heads are wiser still than one;  
“ Chuse you for me, who best shall be content,  
“ When my Desire’s approv’d by your Consent.  
“ One Caution yet is needful to be told,  
“ To guide your Choice: This Wife must not be old.  
“ There goes a Saying, and ’twas shrewdly said,  
“ Old Fish at Table, but young Flesh in Bed,  
“ My Soul abhors the tasteless, dry Embrace  
“ Of a stale Virgin with a Winter-Face:  
“ In that cold Season Love but treats his Guest  
“ With Bean-Straw, and tough Forage at the best.  
“ No crafty Widows shall approach my Bed;  
“ Those are too wise for Bachelors to wed;  
“ As subtle Clerks by many Schools are made,  
“ Twice-marry’d Dames are Mistresses o’th’ Trade:  
“ But young and tender Virgins, rul’d with Ease,  
“ We form like Wax, and mold them as we please.

“ Con-

- “ Conceive me, Sirs, nor take my Sense amiss ;  
 “ ’Tis what concerns my Soul’s eternal Bliss ;  
 “ Since, if I found no Pleasure in my Spouse,  
 “ As Flesh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?  
 “ Then should I live in lewd Adultery,  
 “ And sink downright to *Satan* when I die.  
 “ Or, were I curs’d with an unfruitful Bed,  
 “ The righteous End were lost, for which I wed ;  
 “ To raise up Seed to bless the Pow’rs above,  
 “ And not for Pleasure only, or for Love.  
 “ Think not I doat ; ’tis time to take a Wife,  
 “ When vig’rous Blood forbids a chaster Life :  
 “ Those that are bless’d with Store of Grace divine,  
 “ May live like Saints, by Heav’n’s Consent and mine.  
 “ And since I speak of Wedlock, let me say,  
 “ (As, thank my Stars, in modest Truth I may)  
 “ My Limbs are active ; still I’m sound at Heart,  
 “ And a new Vigour springs in ev’ry Part.  
 “ Think not my Virtue lost, tho’ Time has shed  
 “ These rev’rend Honours on my hoary Head :

16      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

" Thus Trees are crown'd with Blossoms white as  
Snow,

" The vital Sap then rising from below ;

" Old as I am, my lusty Limbs appear

" Like Winter-Greens, that flourish all the Year.

" Now, Sirs, you know to what I stand inclin'd ;

" Let ev'ry Friend with Freedom speak his Mind."

He said ; the rest in diff'rent Parts divide,

The knotty Point was urg'd on either Side :

Marriage, the Theme on which they all declaim'd,

Some prais'd with Wit, and some with Reason blam'd.

Till, what with Proofs, Objections, and Replies,

Each wondrous positive, and wondrous wise,

There fell between his Brothers a Debate ;

*Placebo* this was call'd, and *Justin* that.

First to the Knight *Placebo* thus begun

(Mild were his Looks, and pleasing was his Tone :

Such Prudence, Sir, in all your Words appears,)

As plainly proves, Experience dwells with Years :

Yet you pursue sage *Solomon's* Advice,

To work by Counsel when Affairs are nice :

But

‘ But, with the Wiseman’s leave, I must protest,  
 ‘ (So may my Soul arrive at Ease and Rest,  
 ‘ As still I hold your own Advice the Best.)

‘ Sir, I have liv’d a Courtier all my Days,  
 ‘ And study’d Men, their Manners, and their Ways;  
 ‘ And have observ’d this useful Maxim still,  
 ‘ To let my Betters always have their Will.  
 ‘ Nay, if my Lord affirm’d that Black was White,  
 ‘ My Word was this, *your Honour’s in the Right*.  
 ‘ Th’ assuming Wit, who deems himself so Wise,  
 ‘ As his mistaken Patron to advise,  
 ‘ Let him not dare to vent his dang’rous Thought;  
 ‘ A noble Fool was never in a Fault.  
 ‘ This, Sir, affects not you, whose ev’ry Word  
 ‘ Is weigh’d with Judgment, and befits a Lord:  
 ‘ Your Will is mine; and is (I will maintain)  
 ‘ Pleasing to God, and should be so to Man;  
 ‘ At least, your Courage all the World must praise,  
 ‘ Who dare to wed in your declining Days.

‘ Indulge

18      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

‘ Indulge the Vigour of your mounting Blood,  
‘ And let grey Fools be indolently good,  
‘ Who, past all Pleasure, damn the Joys of Sense  
‘ With rev’rend Dulness and grave Impotence.

*Justin*, who silent fate, and heard the Man,  
Thus, with a Philosophic Frown, began:

‘ A Heathen Author, of the first Degree,  
‘ (Who, tho’ not Faith, had Sense as well as we)  
‘ Bids us be certain our Concerns to trust  
‘ To those of gen’rous Principles, and just.  
‘ The Venture’s greater, I’ll presume to say,  
‘ To give your Person, than your Goods away :  
‘ And therefore, Sir, as you regard your Rest,  
‘ First learn your Lady’s Qualities at least :  
‘ Whether she’s chaste or rampant, proud or civil ;  
‘ Meek as a Saint, or haughty as the Devil ;  
‘ Whether an easy, fond, familiar Fool,  
‘ Or such a Wit as no man e’er can rule.  
‘ ’Tis true, Perfection none must hope to find  
‘ In all this World, much less in Woman-kind ;  
‘ But



' But if her Virtues prove the larger Share,  
 ' Bless the kind Fates, and think your Fortune rare.  
 ' Ah, gentle Sir, take Warning of a Friend,  
 ' Who knows too well the State you thus commend;  
 ' And, spight of all his Praises, must declare,  
 ' All he can find is Bondage, Cost, and Care.  
 ' Heav'n knows, I shed full many a private Tear,  
 ' And sigh in Silence, lest the World should hear:  
 ' While all my Friends applaud my blisful Life,  
 ' And swear no Mortal's happier in a Wife;  
 ' Demure and chaste as any *Vestal* Nun,  
 ' The meekest Creature that beholds the Sun!  
 ' But, by th' immortal Pow'rs, I feel the Pain,  
 ' And he that smarts has Reason to complain.  
 ' Do what you list, for me; you must be sage,  
 ' And cautious sure; for Wisdom is in Age:  
 ' But at these Years, to venture on the Fair---  
 ' (By him, who made the Ocean, Earth, and Air,)  
 ' To please a Wife, when her Occasions call---  
 ' Would busy the most vig'rous of us all.

' And

20     *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

‘ And trust me, Sir, the chafest you can chuse

‘ Will ask Obedience, and exact her Dues.

‘ If what I speak my noble Lord offend,

‘ My tedious Sermon here is at an End.

“ ’Tis well, ’tis wondrous well, the Knight re-

plies,  
“ Most worthy Kinsman, faith you’re mighty wise!

“ We, Sirs, are Fools, and must resign the Cause

“ To heath’nish Authors, Proverbs, and old Saws.

(He spoke with Scorn, and turn’d another way:---)

“ What does my Friend, my dear *Placebo* say?

‘ I say (quoth he) by Heav’n the Man’s to blame,

‘ To slander Wives, and Wedlock’s holy Name.

At this, the Council rose without delay;

Each, in his own Opinion, went his way;

With full Consent, that all Disputes appeas’d,

The Knight should marry when and where he pleas’d.

Who now but *January* exults with Joy?

The Charms of Wedlock all his Soul employ:

Each Nymph by Turns his wav’ring Mind possess’d

And reign’d the short-liv’d Tyrant of his Breast;

While

While Fancy pictur'd ev'ry lively Part,  
 And each bright Image wander'd o'er his Heart.  
 Thus, in some publick *Forum* fix'd on high,  
 A Mirror shows the Figures moving by ;  
 Still one by one, in swift Succession, pass  
 The gliding Shadows o'er the polish'd Glass.  
 This Lady's Charms the nicest cou'd not blame,  
 But vile Suspicions had aspers'd her Fame ;  
 That was with Sense, but not with Virtue, blest ;  
 And one had Grace, that wanted all the rest.  
 Thus doubting long what Nymph he shou'd obey,  
 He fix'd at last upon the youthful *May*.  
 Her Faults he knew not, Love is always blind,  
 But ev'ry Charm revolv'd within his Mind :  
 Her tender Age, her Form divinely Fair !  
 Her easy Motion, her attractive Air !  
 Her sweet Behaviour, her enchanting Face !  
 Her moving Softness, and majestic Grace !  
 Much in his Prudence did our Knight rejoice,  
 And thought no Mortal could dispute this Choice :

Once

22      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

Once more in haste he summon'd ev'ry Friend,  
And told them all, their Pains were at an end :

“ Heav'n, that (said he) inspir'd me first to wed,

“ Provides a Consort worthy of my Bed ;

“ Let none oppose th' Election, since on this

“ Depends my Quiet, and my future Bliss.

“ A Dame there is, the Darling of my Eyes,

“ Young, Beauteous, Artless, Innocent and Wise ;

“ Chaste, tho' not Rich, and tho' not nobly Born,

“ Of honest Parents, and may serve my turn.

“ Her will I wed, if gracious Heav'n so please ;

“ To pass my Age in Sanctity and Ease :

“ And thank the Pow'rs, I may possess alone

“ The lovely Prize, and share my Bliss with none !

“ If you, my Friends, this Virgin can procure,

“ My Joys are full, my Happiness is sure.

“ One only Doubt remains : Full oft' I've heard,

“ By Casuists grave, and deep Divines averr'd ;

“ That 'tis too much for human Race to know

“ The Bliss of Heav'n above, and Earth below.

sonO

“ Now

" Now should the nuptial Pleasures prove so great,  
" To match the Blessings of the future State,  
" Those endless Joys were ill exchang'd for these;  
" Then clear this Doubt, and set my Mind at Ease.

This *Justin* heard; nor could his Spleen controul;  
Touch'd to the Quick, and tickled at the Soul.

' Sir Knight (he cry'd) if this be all your Dread,  
' Heav'n put it past your Doubt, whene'er you wed;  
' And to my fervent Pray'rs so far consent,  
' That, e're the Rites are o'er, you may repent!  
' Good Heav'n, no doubt, the nuptial State approves,  
' Since it chastises still what best it loves:  
' Then be not, Sir, abandon'd to Despair;  
' Seek, and perhaps you'll find, among the Fair,  
' One that may do your Business to a Hair;  
' Not ev'n in Wish your Happiness delay,  
' But prove the Scourge to lash you on your Way:  
' Then to the Skies your mounting Soul shall go,  
' Swift as an Arrow soaring from the Bow.

' Pro-



24     *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

- Provided still, you moderate your Joy,
- Nor in your Pleasures all your Might employ:
- Let Reason's Rule your strong Desires abate,
- Nor please too lavishly your gentle Mate.
- Old Wives there are, of Judgment most acute,
- Who solve these Questions beyond all Dispute;
- Consult with those, and be of better Chear;
- Marry, do Penance, and dismiss your Fear.

So said, they rose, nor more the Work delay'd;  
The Match was offer'd, the Proposals made.  
The Parents, you may think, would soon comply;  
The Old have Int'rest ever in their Eye.  
Nor was it hard to move the Lady's Mind:  
When Fortune favours, still the Fair are kind.

I pass each previous Settlement and Deed,  
Too long for me to write, or you to read:  
Nor will with quaint Impertinence display  
The Pomp, the Pageantry, the proud Array.  
The Time approach'd, to Church the Parties went,  
At once with carnal and devout Intent;

Forth

Forth came the Priest, and bade th' obedient Wife,  
Like *Sarah*, or *Rebecca*, lead her Life.  
Then pray'd the Pow'rs the fruitful Bed to bless,  
And made all sure enough with Holiness.

And now the Palace-Gates are open'd wide,  
The Guests appear in Order, Side by Side,  
And plac'd in State the Bridegroom and the Bride;  
The breathing Flute's soft Notes are heard around,  
And the shrill Trumpets mix their Silver Sound;  
The vaulted Roofs with echoing Musick ring,  
These touch the vocal Stops, and those the trembling  
[String.  
Not thus *Amphion* tun'd the warbling Lyre,  
Nor *Joab* the sounding Clarion could inspire,  
Nor fierce *Theodamas*, whose sprightly Strain  
Could swell the Soul to Rage, and fire the Martial  
[Frain,

*Bacchus* himself, the nuptial Feast to grace,  
(So Poets sing) was present on the Place:  
And lovely *Venus*, Goddess of Delight,  
Shook high her flaming Torch in open Sight,  
And danc'd around, and smil'd on ev'ry Knight:

26 JANUARY and MAY: Or,

Pleas'd her best Servant would his Courage try,

No less in Wedlock than in Liberty.

Full many an Age old *Hymen* had not spy'd

So kind a Bridegroom, or so bright a Bride.

Ye Bards! renown'd among the tuneful Throng

For gentle Lays, and joyous nuptial Song,

Think not your softest Numbers can display

The matchless Glories of this blissful Day,

The Joys are such, as far transcend your Rage,

When tender Youth has wedded stooping Age.

The beautous Dame late smiling at the Board,

And darted am'rous Glances at her Lord.

Not *Hester's* self, whose Charms the *Hebrews* sing,

E'er look'd so lovely on her *Persian* King?

Bright as the rising Sun, in Summer's Day,

And fresh and blooming as the Month of May!

The joyful Knight survey'd her by his Side,

Nor envy'd *Paris* with the *Spartan* Bride:

Still, as his Mind revolv'd with vast Delight,

Th' entraneing Raptures of th' approaching Night:

Pleas'd

Restless

Restless he fate, invoking ev'ry Pow'r  
To speed his Bliss, and haste the happy Hour.  
Meantime the vigorous Dancers beat the Ground,  
And Songs were sung, and flowing Bowls went  
With od'rous Spices they perfum'd the Place,  
And Mirth and Pleasure shone in ev'ry Face.

*Damian* alone, of all the martial Train,  
Sad in the midst of Triumphs, sigh'd for Pain,  
*Damian* alone, the Knight's obsequious *Squire*,  
Consum'd at Heart, and fed a secret Fire,  
His lovely Mistress all his Soul possess'd;  
He look'd, dy he languish'd, and could take no Rest:  
His Task perform'd, he sadly went his way,  
Fell on his Bed, and lost the Light of Day:  
There let him lie, till his relenting Dame  
Weep in her turn, and waister in equal Flame.  
The weary Sun, as learned Poets write,  
Forsook the Horizon, and roll'd down the Light:  
While glitt'ring Stars his absent Beams supply  
And Night's dark Mantle overspread the Sky.

28 JANUARY, and MAY: Or,

Then rose the Guests; and, as the time requir'd,  
Each paid his Thanks, and decently retir'd.

The Foe once gone, our Knight prepar'd to undress,  
So keen he was, and eager to possess:

But first thought fit th' Assistance to receive,

Which grave Physicians scruple not to give:

*Satyrión*, near, with hot *Eringo's*, stood

*Cantharides*, to fire the lazy Blood;

Whose Use old Bards describe in lascious Rhymes,

And Critics learn'd explain to modern Times.

By this the Sheets were spread, the Bride undress'd,

The Room was sprinkl'd, and the Bed was blest'd.

What next ensu'd, be seems not me to say:

'Tis sung, he labour'd till the dawning Day:

Then briskly sprung from Bed, with Heart so

As all were nothing he had done by Night;

And sipp'd his Cordial, as he sat upright:

He kiss'd his balmy Spouse with wanton Play,

And jolly sung a lusty Roundelay.

And Night's dark Mantle overpore the Sky.

Then

C

Then



Then on the Couch his weary Limbs he cast;  
For ev'ry Labour must have Rest at last.

But anxious Cares the pensive *Squire* oppress'd;  
Sleep fled his Eyes, and Peace forsook his Breast;  
The raging Flames that in his Bosom dwell,  
He wanted Art to hide, and Means to tell.  
Yet hoping Time th' Occasion might betray,  
Compos'd a Sonnet to the lovely *May*;  
Which writ, and folded with the nicest Art,  
He wrapp'd in Silk, and laid upon his Heart.

When now the fourth revolving Day was run,  
(*'Twas June, and Cancer* had receiv'd the Sun)  
Forth from her Chamber came the beauteous Bride;  
The good old Knight mov'd slowly by her Side.  
High Mass was sung; they feasted in the Hall;  
The Servants round stood ready at their Call.  
The *Squire* alone was absent from the Board,  
And much his Sickness griev'd his worthy Lord,  
Who pray'd his Spouse, attended by her Train,  
To visit *Damian*, and divert his Pain.

30 JANUARY and MAY: Or,

Th' obliging Dames obey'd with one Consent;

They left the Hall, and to his Lodging went.

The Female Tribe surround him as he lay,

And close beside him fate the gentle May:

Where, as she try'd his Pulse, he softly drew

A speaking Sigh, and cast a mournful View;

Then gave his Bill, and brib'd the Powers divine

With secret Vows, to favour his Design.

Who studies now, but discontented May?

On her soft Couch uneasily she lay:

The lumpish Husband snar'd away the Night,

Till Coughs awak'd him near the Morning-Light.

What then he did, I not presume to tell,

Nor if she thought herself in Heaven or Hell:

Honest and dull in nuptial Bed they lay,

Till the Bell toll'd, and all arose to pray.

Were it by forceful Destiny decreed,

Or did from Chance, or Nature's Power proceed;

Or that some Star, with Aspect kind to Love,

Shed its selectest Influence from above;

Whatever

Whatever was the Cause, the tender Dame  
Felt the first Motions of an infant Flame,  
Receiv'd th' Impressions of the Love-sick Squire;  
And wasted in the soft infectious Fire.

Ye Fair, draw near, let May's Example move  
Your gentle Minds to pity those who love!  
Had some fierce Tyrant in her Stead been found,  
The poor Adorer, sure, had hang'd or drown'd;  
But she, your Sex's Mirrour, free from Pride,  
Was much too meek to prove a Homicide.

But, to my Tale: Some Sages have defin'd  
Pleasure the sov'reign Bliss of Human-kind;  
Our Knight (who study'd much, we may suppose)  
Deriv'd his high Philosophy from those;  
For, like a Prince, he bore the vast Expence  
Of lavish Pomp and proud Magnificence;  
His House was stately, his Retinue gay,  
Large was his Train, and gorgeous his Array;  
His spacious Garden, made to yield to none,  
Was compass'd round with Walls of solid Stone:

32 JANUARY and MAY: Or,

Priapus could not half describe the Grace

(Tho' God of Gardens) of this charming Place:

A Place to tire the rambling Wits of France

In long Descriptions, and exceed Romance;

Enough to shame the gentlest Bard that sings

Of painted Meadows, and of purling Springs.

Full in the Center of the flow'ry Ground,

A Crystal Fountain spread its Streams around,

The fruitful Banks with verdant Laurels crown'd:

About this Spring (if ancient Fame says true)

The dapper Elves their Moon-light Sports pursue;

Their pigmy King, and little Fairy Queen,

In circling Dances gambol'd on the Green,

While tuneful Sprites a merry Concert made,

And airy Music warbled thro' the Shade.

Hither the noble Knight would oft repair,

(His Scene of Pleasure, and peculiar Care)

For this he held it dear, and always bore

The Silver Key that lock'd the Garden-Door.

Was compos'd round with Walls of solid stone:

Printed

To

To this sweet Place, in Summer's sultry Heat,  
He us'd from Noise and Business to retreat;  
And here in Dalliance spend the live-long Day,  
*Solus cum solay*, with his sprightly May.  
For, what'er Work was undischarg'd a-bed,  
The duteous Knight in this fair Garden sped.

But ah! what Mortal lives of Bliss secure,  
How short a Space our worldly Joys endure!  
O Fortune, fair, like all thy treach'rous Kind,  
But faithless still, and wav'ring as the Wind!  
O painted Monster! form'd Mankind to cheat,  
With pleasing Poison, and with soft Deceit!  
This rich, this am'rous, venerable Knight,  
Amidst his Ease, his Solace, and Delight,  
Struck blind by Thee, resigns his Days to Grief,  
And calls on Death, the Wretch's last Relief.

The Rage of Jealousy then seiz'd his Mind;  
For much he fear'd the Faith of Womankind.



34 JANUARY and MARY On,

His Wife, not suffer'd from his Side to stray,  
Was Captive kept; he watch'd her Night and Day,  
Abridg'd her Pleasures, and confin'd her Sway.

Full oft in Tears did hapless *Mary* complain,  
And sigh'd full oft; but sigh'd and wept in vain.

She look'd on *Damian* with a Lover's Eye;  
For oh, 'twas fix'd; she must possess, or die!

Nor less Impatience vex'd her am'rous *Squire*,  
Wild with Delay, and burning with Desire.

Watch'd as she was, yet could he not refrain  
By secret Writing to disclose his Pain.

The *Dame* by Signs reveal'd her kind Intent,  
Till both were conscious what each other meant.

Ah, gentle Knight! what would thy Eyes avail,  
Tho' they could see as far as Ships can sail?

'Tis better sure, when blind, deceiv'd to be,  
Than be deluded when a Man can see.

*Argus* himself, so cautious and so wise,  
Was over-watch'd, for all his hundred Eyes;

So many an honest Husband may, 'tis known,  
Who, wisely, never thinks the Case his own.

The Dame at last, by Diligence and Care,  
Procur'd the Key her Knight was wont to bear;  
She took the Wards in Wax before the Fire,  
And gave th' Impression to the trusty Squire,  
By means of this, some Wonder shall appear,  
Which in due Place and Season you may hear;

Well sung sweet *Ovid* in the Days of yore,  
What Slight is that which Love will not explore?  
And *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* plainly shew,  
The Feats true Lovers, when they list, can do:  
Tho' watch'd and captive, yet, in spite of all,  
They found the Art of kissing thro' a Wall.

But now no longer from our Tale to stray;  
It happ'd, that once upon a Summer's Day,  
Our rev'rend Knight was urg'd to am'rous Play:  
He rais'd his Spouse, e're *Matin-Bell* was rung,  
And thus his Morning-Canticle he sang:

Conscious of Pleasures to the World unknown:

"Awake,

"Awake, my Love, disclose thy radiant Eyes ;

"Arise, my Wife, my beauteous Lady, rise!

"Hear how the Doves with pensive Notes com-  
[plain,

"And in soft Murmurs tell the Trees their Pain ;

"The Winter's past ; the Clouds and Tempests  
[fly ;

"The Sun adorns the Fields, and brightens all the  
[Sky.

"Fair without Spot, whose ev'ry charming Part

"My Bosom wounds, and captivates my Heart :

"Come, and in mutual Pleasures let's engage,

"Joy of my Life, and Comfort of my Age."

This heard, th' *Damian* strait a Sign she made,

To haste before ; the gentle *Squire* obey'd :

Secret, and undiscry'd, he took his Way,

And ambush'd close behind an Arbour lay.

It was not long e're *January* came,

And Hand in Hand with him his lovely Dame :

Blind as he was, not doubting all was sure,

He turn'd the Key, and made the Gate secure.

"Here let us walk (he said) observ'd by none,

"Conscious of Pleasures to the World unknown :

"Awake" " So

" So may my Soul have Joy, as thou, my Wife,

" Art far the dearest Solace of my Life; *llw bQA* "

" And rather would I chuse, by Heav'n above, "

" To die this instant, than to lose thy Love! *all* "

" Reflect what Truth was in my Passion shown,

" When unendow'd, I took thee for my own; *A* }

" And sought no Treasure, but thy Heart alone; }

" Old as I am, and now depriv'd of Sight, *double* }

" While thou art faithful to thy own true Knight; }

" Nor Age, nor Blindness rob me of Desight. }

" Each other Loss with Patience I can bear, *II*

" The Loss of Thee is what I only fear. *w dso W)*

" Consider then, my Lady, and my Wife, *I*

" The solid Comforts of a virtuous Life. *reaved I*

" As first, the Love of *Christ* himself you gain; "

" Next, your own Honour undefil'd maintain; "

" And lastly, that which sure your Mind must move,

" My whole Estate shall gratify your Love: *GA* "

" Make your own Terms, and e're to-morrow's Sun

" Displays his Light, by Heav'n it shall be done; "

" I

" I seal the Contract with an holy Kiss,

" And will perform, by this—my Dear, and this—

" Have Comfort, Spouse, nor think thy Lord unkind;

" 'Tis Love, not Jealousy, that fires my Mind.

" For when thy Charms my sober Thoughts engage,

" And join'd to them my own unequal Age;

" From thy dear Side I have no Pow'r to part,

" Such secret Transports warm my melting Heart.

" For who, that once possess'd those heav'nly Charms,

" Could live one Moment absent from thy Arms?"

He ceas'd; and *May*, with modest Grace reply'd,  
(Weak was her Voice, as while she spoke she cry'd)

" Heaven knows, (with that a tender Sigh she drew)

" I have a Soul to save, as well as you;

" And, what no less you to my Charge commend,

" My dearest Honour, will to Death defend.

" To you in holy Church I gave my Hand,

" And join'd my Heart in Wedlock's sacred Band:

" Yet after this, if you distrust my Care,

" Then hear, my Lord, and witness what I swear:

First,



the MERCHANT'S TALE. 39

‘ First, may the yawning Earth her Bosom rend,  
‘ And let me hence to Hell alive descend;  
‘ Or die the Death I dread no less than Hell;  
‘ Sow’d in a Sack, and plung’d into a Well;  
‘ E’re I my Fame by one lewd Act disgrace,  
‘ Or once renounce the Honour of my Race.  
‘ For know, Sir Knight, of gentle Blood I came;  
‘ I loath a Whore, and startle at the Name.  
‘ But jealous Men on their own Crimes reflect,  
‘ And learn from thence their Ladies to suspect:  
‘ Else, why these needless Cautions, Sir, to me?  
‘ These Doubts and Fears of Female Constancy?  
‘ This Chime still rings in ev’ry Lady’s Ear,  
‘ The only Strain a Wife must hope to hear.”

Thus, while she spoke, a sidelong Glance she cast,  
Where *Dumion* kneeling, - worshipp’d as she pass’d.  
She saw him watch the Motions of her Eye,  
And singled out a Pear-Tree planted nigh:  
‘Twas charg’d with Fruit that made a goodly Show,  
And hung with dangling Pears was ev’ry Bough.

Thither

40 JANUARY and MAY: Or,

Thither th'obsequious *Squire* address'd his Pace,  
And climbing, in the Summit took his place:

The Knight and Lady walk'd beneath in View,  
Where let us leave them, and our Tale pursue.

'Twas now the Season, when the glorious Sun  
His heav'nly Progress thro' the *Twins* had run;  
And *Jove*, exalted, his mild Influence yields,  
To glad the Glebe, and paint the flow'ry Fields:  
Clear was the Day, and *Phæbus* rising bright,  
Had streak'd the azure Firmament with Light:  
He pierc'd the glitt'ring Clouds with Golden  
And warm'd the Womb of Earth with genial  
[Streams,  
[Beams.

It so befel, in that fair Morning-tide,  
The Fairies sported on the Garden's Side,  
And, in the midst, their Monarch and his Bride.  
So featly tripp'd the light-foot Ladies round,  
The Knights so nimbly o'er the Greenward,  
That scarce they bent the Flow'rs, or touch'd the  
[bound,  
[Ground.]  
The Dances ended, all the Fairy Train  
For Pinks and Daisies search'd the flow'ry Plain  
While

While on a Bank reclin'd, of rising Green,  
Thus, with a Frown, the King bespoke his Queen:

“ 'Tis too apparent, argue what you can,

“ The Treachery you Women use to Man :

“ A thousand Authors have this Truth made out,

“ And sad Experience leaves no room for Doubt.

“ Heav'n rest thy Spirit, noble Solomon,

“ A wiser Monarch never saw the Sun :

“ All Wealth, all Honours, the supreme Degree

“ Of earthly Bliss, was well bestow'd on Thee!

“ For sagely hast thou said, Of all Mankind,

“ One only just and righteous, hope to find.

“ But, should'st thou search the spacious World  
[around,

“ Yet one good Woman is not to be found.

“ Thus says the King who knew your Wickedness;

“ The Son of *Sirach* testifies no less.

“ So may some Wild-fire on your Bodies fall,

“ Or some devouring Plague consume you all ;

“ As well you view the Leacher in the Tree,

“ And well this honourable Knight you see :

42     *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

“ But since he’s blind and old (a helpless Case!) ”

“ His Squire shall cuckold him before your Face. ”

“ Now, by my own dread Majesty I swear, ”

“ And by this awful Sceptre which I bear, ”

“ No impious Wretch shall ‘scape unpunish’d long, ”

“ That in my Presence offers such a Wrong. ”

“ I will this Instant undeceive the Knight, ”

“ And, in the very Act, restore his Sight; ”

“ And fet the Strumpet here in open View, ”

“ A Warning to these Ladies, and to You, ”

“ And all the faithless Sex, for ever to be true. ”

‘ And will you so, reply’d the Queen, indeed? ”

‘ Now, by my Mother’s Soul, it is decreed, ”

‘ She shall not want an Answer at her Need. ”

‘ For her, and for her Daughters, I’ll engage, ”

‘ And all the Sex in each succeeding Age: ”

‘ Art shall be theirs, to varnish an Offence, ”

‘ And fortify their Crimes with Confidence. ”

‘ Nay, were they taken in a strict Embrace, ”

‘ Seen with both Eyes, and pinion’d on the Place; ”

‘ All

' All they shall need, is, to protest and swear,  
 ' Breathe a soft Sigh, and drop a tender Tear;  
 ' Till their wise Husbands, gull'd by Arts like these,  
 ' Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as Geese.  
 ' What tho' this slanderous Jew, this Solomon,  
 ' Call'd Women Fools, and knew full many a one?  
 ' The wiser Wits of later Times declare,  
 ' How constant, chaste, and virtuous Women are:  
 ' Witness the Martyrs, who resign'd their Breath,  
 ' Serene in Torments, unconcern'd in Death:  
 ' And witness next, what Roman Authors tell,  
 ' How *Arria*, *Portia*, and *Lucretia* fell.  
 ' But since the sacred Leaves to all are free,  
 ' And Men interpret Texts, why should not we?  
 ' By this, no more was meant, than to have shown,  
 ' That sov'reign Goodness dwells in Him alone,  
 ' Who only Is, and is but only One.  
 ' But grant the worst, shall Women then be weigh'd  
 ' By ev'ry Word that *Solomon* has said?



44 JANUARY and MARY; Or,

‘ What tho’ this King (as ancient Story boasts)  
‘ Built a fair Temple to the Lord of Hosts;  
‘ He ceas’d at last his Maker to adore,  
‘ And did as much for Idol-Gods, or more.  
‘ Beware what lavish Praises you confer  
‘ On a rank Leacher and Idolater ;  
‘ Whose Reign indulgent God (says holy Writ)  
‘ Did but for *David*’s righteous Sake permit ;  
‘ *David*, the Monarch after Heav’n’s own Mind,  
‘ Who lov’d our Sex, and honour’d all our Kind.

‘ Well, I’m a Woman, and as such must speak ;  
‘ Silence would swell me, and my Heart would  
‘ Know then, I scorn your dull Authorities, <sup>[break.</sup>  
‘ Your idle Wits, and all their learned Lyes.  
‘ By Heav’n, those Authors are our Sex’s Foes,  
‘ Whom, in our Right, I must and will oppose.

“ Nay (quoth the King) dear Madam, be not  
“ I yield it up, but since I gave my Oath, <sup>[wroth : But</sup>  
“ That this much-injur’d Knight again should see,  
“ It must be done ---- I am a King, said he,

And

“ And

*the* MERCHANT'S TALE. 45

" And one, whose Faith has ever sacred been,"

' And so has mine (she said) --- I am a Queen ;

' Her Answer she shall have, I undertake ;

' And thus an End of all Dispute I make.

' Try when you list ; and you shall find, my

' It is not in our Sex to break our Word.' [Lord,

We leave them here in this heroick Strain,

And to the Knight our Story turns again ;

Who in the Garden, with his lovely May,

Sung merrier than the Cuckow or the Jay ;

This was his Song, " Oh, kind and constant be ;

" Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee.

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew,

By easy Steps, to where the Pear-tree grew :

The longing Dame look'd up, and spy'd her Love

Full fairly perch'd among the Boughs above.

She stopp'd ; and sighing : ' Oh, good Gods, she

' What Pangs, what sudden Shoots distend my [cry'd,

' Oh, for the tempting Fruit, so fresh, so green ;-- [Side !

' Help, for the Love of Heav'n's immortal Queen !

46 JANUARY and MARY: Or,

‘ Help, dearest Lord, and save at once the Life

‘ Of thy poor Infant, and thy longing Wife!

Sore sigh’d the Knight, to hear his Lady’s Cry;

But could not climb, and had no Servant nigh:

Old as he was, and void of Eye-sight too,

What could, alas! the helpless Husband do?

‘ And must I languish then (she said) and die,

‘ Yet view the lovely Fruit before my Eye?

‘ At least, kind Sir, for Charity’s sweet Sake,

‘ Vouchsafe the Trunk between your Arms to take;

‘ Then from your Back I might ascend the Tree;

‘ Do you but stoop, and leave the rest to me.

“ With all my Soul (he thus reply’d again)

“ I’d spend my dearest Blood to ease thy Pain.”

With that, his Back against the Trunk he bent;

She seiz’d a Twig, and up the Tree she went!

Now prove your Patience, gentle Ladies all!

Nor let on me your heavy Anger fall:

’Tis Truth I tell, tho’ not in Phrase refin’d;

Tho’ blunt my Tale, yet honest is my Mind.

What

What Feats the Lady in the Tree might do,  
I pass, as Gambols never known to you :  
But sure, it was a merrier Fit, she swore,  
Than in her Life she ever felt before.

In that nice Moment, lo ! the wond'ring Knight .  
Look'd out, and stood restor'd to sudden Sight.  
Strait on the Tree his eager Eyes he bent,  
As one, whose Thoughts were on his Spouse in-  
But when he saw his Bosom-Wife so dress'd, <sup>[tent ;</sup>  
His Rage was such as cannot be express'd :  
Not frantic Mothers, when their Infants die,  
With louder Clamours rend the vaulted Sky :  
He cry'd, he roar'd, he storm'd, he tore his Hair ;  
“ Death ! Hell ! and Furies ! what dost thou do  
What ails my Lord ? the trembling Dame re- <sup>[there ?”</sup>  
“ I thought your Patience had been better try'd : <sup>[ply'd ;</sup>  
“ Is this your Love, ungrateful and unkind ?  
“ This my Reward for having cur'd the Blind ?  
“ Why was I taught to make my Husband see,  
“ By struggling with a Man upon a Tree ?

48      *JANUARY* and *MAY*: Or,

‘ Did I, for this, the Pow’r of Magic prove?

‘ Unhappy Wife, whose Crime was too much Love!

“ If this be struggling, by this holy Light,

“ ’Tis struggling with a Vengeance (quoth the

“ So Heav’n preserve the Sight it has restor’d, <sup>[Knight.]</sup>

“ As with these Eyes I plainly saw thee whor’d ;

“ Whor’d by my Slave --- Perfidious Wretch! may

“ As surely seize thee, as I saw too well. <sup>[Hell]</sup>

‘ Guard me, good Angels! cry’d the gentle *May*,

‘ Pray Heav’n, this Magic work the proper Way!

‘ Alas, my Love ! ’tis certain, could you see,

‘ You ne’er had us’d these killing Words to me :

‘ So help me, Fates, as ’tis no perfect Sight,

‘ But some faint Glimm’ring of a doubtful Light.’

“ What I have said (quoth he) I must maintain ;

“ For, by th’ immortal Pow’rs, it *seem’d* too plain--

‘ By all those Pow’rs, some Frenzy seiz’d your

‘ (Reply’d the Dame) are these the Thanks I find? <sup>[Mind,</sup>

‘ Wretch that I am, that e’er I was so kind !

She



She said; a rising Sigh express'd her Woe,  
The ready Tears apace began to flow,  
And as they fell, she wip'd from either Eye  
The Drops (for Women, when they list, can cry.)

The Knight was touch'd, and in his Looks ap-  
Signs of Remorse, while thus his Spouse he chear'd :  
[pear'd

" Madam, 'tis past, and my short Anger o'er ;

" Come down, and vex your tender Heart no

" Excuse me, Dear, if aught amiss was said ;  
[more :

" For, on my Soul, Amends shall soon be made :

" Let my Repentance your Forgiveness draw ;

" By Heav'n, I swore but what I *thought* I saw."

' Ah, my lov'd Lord ! 'twas much unkind (she  
[cry'd)  
' On bare Suspicion thus to treat your Bride.

' But till your Sight's establish'd for a while,

' Imperfect Objects may your Sense beguile.

' Thus when from Sleep we first our Eyes display,

' The Balls are wounded with the piercing Ray,

' And dusky Vapours rise, and intercept the Day :



P R O L O G U E

TO THE  
Wife of Bath's TALE.

*By the same Hand.*

**B**Ehold † the Woes of Matrimonial Life,  
And hear with Rev'rence an experienc'd  
To dear-bought Wisdom give the Credit due,  
And think, for once, a Woman tells you true.  
In all these Trials I have borne a Part,  
I was myself the Scourge that caus'd the Smart:  
For, since Fifteen, in Triumph have I led  
Five captive Husbands from the Church to Bed.

*Christ* saw a Wedding once, the Scripture says,  
And saw but one, 'tis thought, in all his Days:  
Whence some infer, whose Conscience is too nice,  
No pious *Christian* ought to marry twice.

† *The Wife of Bath speaks.*

But

But let them read, and solve me, if they can,

The Words address'd to the *Samaritan*.

Five times in lawful Wedlock she was join'd;

And sure the certain Stint was ne'er defin'd.

*Increase and Multiply*, was Heav'n's Command,  
And that's a Text I clearly understand.

This too, *Let Men their Sires and Mothers leave,*

*And to their dearer Wives for ever cleave,*

More Wives than one by *Solomon* were try'd,

Or else the Wifest of Mankind's bely'd.

I've had myself full many a merry Fit;

And trust in Heav'n I may have many yet,

For when my transitory Spouse, unkind,

Shall die, and leave his woeful Wife behind,

I'll take the next good *Christian* I can find.

*Paul*, knowing one could never serve our turn,

Declar'd, 'twas better far to wed than burn.

There's Danger in assembling Fire and Tow;

I grant 'em that; and what it means, you know,

The same Apostle too has elsewhere own'd,  
No Precept for Virginity he found:  
'Tis but a Counsel---and we Women still  
Take which we like, the Counsel, or our Will.

I envy not their Bliss, if he or she  
Think fit to live in perfect Chastity;  
Pure let them be, and free from Taint of Vice;  
I, for a few slight Spots, am not so nice.  
Heav'n calls us different Ways, on These bestows  
One proper Gift, another grants to Those:  
Not ev'ry Man's oblig'd to sell his Store,  
And give up all his Substance to the Poor;  
Such, as are perfect, may, I can't deny;  
But, by your Leave, Divines, so am not I.

Full many a Saint, since first the World began,  
Liv'd an unspotted Maid, in spite of Man:  
Let such (a God's Name) with fine Wheat be fed,  
And let us honest Wives eat Barley-bread.  
For me, I'll keep the Post assign'd by Heav'n,  
And use the copious Talent it has giv'n:



Let my good Spouse pay Tribute, do me Right,  
 And keep an equal Reck'ning ev'ry Night,  
 His proper Body is not his, but mine;  
 For so said *Paul*, and *Paul's* a sound Divine.

Know then, of those five Husbands I have had,  
 Three were just tolerable, two were bad.  
 The three were old, but rich and fond beside,  
 And toil'd most piteously to please their Bride:  
 But since their Wealth (the best they had) was mine,  
 The rest, without much Loss, I could resign;  
 Sure to be lov'd, I took no Pains to please,  
 Yet had more Pleasure far than they had Ease.

Presents flow'd in apace: with Show'rs of Gold  
 They made their Court, like *Jupiter* of old.  
 If I but smil'd, a sudden Youth they found,  
 And a new Palsy seiz'd them when I frown'd.  
 Ye sov'reign Wives! give ear, and understand;  
 Thus shall ye speak, and exercise Command.  
 For never was it giv'n to mortal Man,  
 To lye so boldly as a Woman can.

Forswear the Fact, tho' seen with both his Eyes,  
And call her Maids to witness how he lyes.

' Hark, old Sir *Paul* ! ('twas thus I us'd to say)  
' Whence is our Neighbour's Wife so rich and gay?  
' Treated, caref'd, where-e'er she's pleas'd to roam?  
' I sit in Tatters, and immur'd at Home.  
' Why to her House dost thou so oft repair?  
' Art thou so am'rous? and is she so fair?  
' If I but see a Cousin, or a Friend,  
' Lord ! how you swell, and rage like any Fiend!  
' But you reel Home, a drunken beastly Bear,  
' Then preach till Midnight in your easy Chair,  
' Cry, Wives are false, and ev'ry Woman evil,  
' And give up all that's Female to the Devil.  
' If poor, (you say) she drains her Husband's Purse;  
' If rich, she keeps her Priest, or something worse;  
' If highly born, intolerably vain,  
' Vapours and Pride by turn possess her Brain;  
' Now gayly mad, now sourly splenetick,  
' Freakish when well, and fretful when she's sick.

' If

‘ If fair, then chaste she cannot long abide,  
‘ By pressing Youth attack’d on ev’ry side:  
‘ If foul, her Wealth the lusty Lover lures,  
‘ Or else her Wit some Fool-gallant procures;  
‘ Or else she dances with becoming Grace,  
‘ Or Shape excuses the Defects of Face,  
‘ There swims no Goose so grey, but, soon or late,  
‘ She finds some honest Gander for her Mate,  
‘ Horfes (thou say’st) and Asses, Men may try,  
‘ And ring suspected Vessels e’er they buy:  
‘ But Wives, a random Choice, untry’d they take,  
‘ They dream in Courtship, but in Wedlock wake:  
‘ Then, nor till then, the Veil’s remov’d away,  
‘ And all the Woman glares in open Day.  
‘ You tell me, to preserve your Wife’s good Grace  
‘ Your Eyes must always languish on my Face;  
‘ Your Tongue with constant Flatt’ries feed my Ear,  
‘ And tag each Sentence with, My Life! my Dear!  
‘ If, by strange Chance, a modest Blush be rais’d,  
‘ Be sure my fine Complexion must be prais’d.

‘ My

- ‘ My Garments always must be new and gay,
- ‘ And Feasts still kept upon my Wedding-Day.
- ‘ Then must my Nurse be pleas’d, and fav’rite Maid;
- ‘ And endless Treats, and endless Visits paid
- ‘ To a long Train of Kindred, Friends, Allies;
- ‘ All this thou say’st, and all thou say’st are Lyes.
- ‘ On *Jenkin* too you cast a squinting Eye:
- ‘ What! can your Prentice raise your Jealousy?
- ‘ Fresh are his ruddy Cheeks, his Forehead fair,
- ‘ And like the burnish’d Gold his curling Hair.
- ‘ But clear thy wrinkled Brow, and quit thy Sorrow,
- ‘ I’d scorn your Prentice, should you die to-morrow.
- ‘ Why are thy Chests all lock’d? on what De-  
[sign]
- ‘ Are not thy worldly Goods and Treasure mine?
- ‘ Sir, I’m no Fool; nor shall you, by *St. John*,
- ‘ Have Goods and Body to yourself alone;
- ‘ One you shall quit, in spite of both your Eyes---
- ‘ I heed not, I, the Bolts, the Locks, the Spies.
- ‘ If you had Wit, you’d say, “ Go where you will,
- “ Dear Spouse; I credit not the Tales they tell:

" Take all the Freedoms of a married Life ;

" I know thee for a virtuous, faithful Wife."

' Lord, when you have enough, what need you  
care

' How merrily soever others fare ?

' Tho' all the Day I give and take Delight,

' Doubt not, sufficient will be left at Night,

' 'Tis but a just and rational Desire,

' To light a Taper at a Neighbour's Fire.

' There's Danger too, you think, in rich Array,

' And none can long be modest that are gay ;

' The Cat, if you but findge her tabby Skin,

' The Chimney keeps, and sits content within ;

' But once grown sleek, will from her Corner run,

' Sport with her Tail, and wanton in the Sun :

' She licks her fair round Face, and frisks abroad,

' To show her Furr, and to be catterwaw'd."

Lo thus, my Friends, I wrought to my Desires  
These three right-ancient venerable Sires.

I told 'em, Thus you say, and thus you do --

And told 'em false ; but *Jenkin* swore 'twas true.

I, like



I, like a Dog, could bite as well as whine,  
 And first complain'd, whene'er the Guilt was mine.  
 I tax'd them oft with Wenching and Amours,  
 When their weak Legs scarce dragg'd 'em out of  
 And swore, the Rambles that I took by Night,  
 Were all to spy what Damsels they bedight.  
 That Colour brought me many Hours of Mirth;  
 For all this Wit is giv'n us from our Birth.  
 Heav'n gave to Woman the peculiar Grace  
 To spin, to weep, and cully human Race.  
 By this nice Conduct, and this prudent Course,  
 By Murm'ring, Wheedling, Stratagem, and Force,  
 I still prevail'd, and would be in the Right,  
 Or Curtain-Lectures made a restless Night.  
 If once my Husband's Arm was o'er my Side,  
 What! so familiar with your Spouse? I cry'd:  
 I levy'd first a Tax upon his Need;  
 Then let him——'twas a Nicety indeed!  
 Let all Mankind this certain Maxim hold,  
 Marry who will, our Sex is to be sold.

With empty Hands no Taffels can you lure ;  
 But fulsome Love for Gain we can endure :  
 For Gold we love the Impotent and Old,  
 And heave, and pant, and kiss, and cling for  
 Yet with Embraces, Curses oft' I mixt ;  
 Then kiss'd again, and chid and rail'd betwixt.  
 Well, I may make my Will in Peace, and die ;  
 For not one Word in Man's Arrear am I.  
 To drop a dear Dispute I was unable,  
 Ev'n tho' the Pope himself had set at Table.  
 But when my Point was gain'd, then thus I spoke :  
 " Billy, my Dear, how sheepishly you look !  
 " Approach, my Spouse, and let me kiss thy  
 " Thou should'st be always thus, resign'd and  
 " Of Job's great Patience since so oft' you preach,  
 " Well should you practise, who so well can  
 " 'Tis difficult to do, I must allow ;  
 " But I, my Dearest, will instruct you how.  
 " Great is the Blessing of a prudent Wife,  
 " Who puts a Period to domestic Strife.

" One

- " One of us two must rule, and one obey ;  
 " And since in Man right Reason bears the Sway,  
 " Let ~~that~~ frail Thing, weak Woman, have her  
     [Way.]  
 " The Wives of all my Family have rul'd  
 " Their tender Husbands, and their Passions cool'd.  
 " Fye, 'tis unmanly thus to sigh and groan ;  
 " What ! would you have me to yourself alone ?  
 " Why, take me, Love ! take all and ev'ry Part !  
 " Here's your Revenge ! you love it at your Heart.  
 " Would I vouchsafe to sell what Nature gave,  
 " You little think what Custom I could have.  
 " But see ! I'm all your own --- nay, hold --- for  
     [shame !  
 " What means my Dear --- indeed --- you are to  
     [blame."  
 Thus with my first three Lords I pass'd my Life,  
 A very Woman, and a very Wife.  
 What Sums from these old Spouses I could raise,  
 Procur'd young Husbands in my riper Days.  
 Tho' past my Bloom, not yet decay'd was I,  
 Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a Pyc;

In Country-Dances still I bore the Bell,  
And sung as sweet as Evening-*Philomel*.  
To clear my Quail-Pipe, and refresh my Soul,  
Full oft I drain'd the spicy Nut-brown Bowl;  
Rich luscious Wines, that youthful Blood improve,  
And warm the swelling Veins to Feats of Love;  
For 'tis as sure, as Cold engenders Hail,  
A liqu'rish Mouth must have a lech'rous Tail:  
Wine lets no Lover unrewarded go,  
As all true Gamesters by Experience know.

But oh, good Gods! whene'er a Thought I cast  
On all the Joys of Youth and Beauty past,  
To find in Pleasures I have had my Part,  
Still warms me to the Bottom of my Heart.  
This wicked World was once my dear Delight;  
Now all my Conquests, all my Charms, good night!  
The Flour consum'd, the best that now I can  
Is e'en to make my Market of the Bran,

My fourth dear Spouse was not exceeding true:  
He kept, 'twas thought, a private Miss, or two:

But

But all that Score I paid — as how? you'll say;  
 Not with my Body, in a filthy Way:  
 But I so dress'd, and danc'd, and drank, and din'd;  
 And view'd a Friend, with Eyes so very kind,  
 As stung his Heart, and made his Marrow fry  
 With burning Rage, and frantick Jealousy.  
 His Soul, I hope, enjoys eternal Glory;  
 For here on Earth I was his Purgatory.  
 Oft', when his Shoe the most severely wrung,  
 He put on careless Airs, and sat and sung.  
 How sore I gall'd him, only Heav'n could know,  
 And he that felt, and I that caus'd the Woe.  
 He dy'd, when last from Pilgrimage I came,  
 With other Gossips, from *Jerusalem*;  
 And now lies buried underneath a Rood,  
 Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest Wood.  
 A Tomb, indeed, with fewer Sculptures grac'd,  
 Than that *Mausolus*' pious Widow plac'd;  
 Or where inshrin'd the great *Darius* lay;  
 But Cost on Graves is merely thrown away.



The Pit fill'd up, with Turf we cover'd o'er  
So, blefs the good Man's Soul; I say no more.

Now for my fifth lov'd Lord, the last and best;  
(Kind Heav'n afford him everlasting Rest)

Full hearty was his Love; and I can shew

The Tokens on my Ribs in Black and Blue;

Yet, with a Knack, my Heart he could have won,

While yet the Smart was shooting in the Bone.

How quaint an Appetite in Women reigns!

Free Gifts we scorn, and love what costs us Pains;

Let Men avoid us, and on them we leap;

A glutted Market makes Provision cheap.

In pure good Will I took this jovial Spark;

Of Oxford he, a most egregious Clerk.

He boarded with a Widow in the Town,

A trusty Gossip, one Dame Alison.

Full well the Secrets of my Soul she knew,

Better than e'er our Parish-Priest could do.

To her I told whatever could befall;

Had but my Husband piss'd against a Wall,

Or

Or done a thing that might have cost his Life,  
 She --- and my Niece --- and one more worthy  
 Had known it all : What most he would conceal, <sup>[Wife,</sup>  
 To these I made no scruple to reveal,  
 Off' has he blush'd from Ear to Ear for Shame,  
 That e'er he told a Secret to his Dame.

It so befel, in holy Time of Lent,  
 That off' a Day I to this Gossip went ;  
 (My Husband, thank my Stars, was out of Town)  
 From House to House we rambled up and down,  
 This Clerk, my self, and my good Neighbour *Alce*,  
 To see, be seen, to tell, and gather Tales.  
 Visits to ev'ry Church we daily paid,  
 And march'd in ev'ry holy Masquerade ;  
 The Stations duly, and the Vigils kept ;  
 Not much we fasted, but scarce ever slept.  
 At Sermons too I shone in Scarlet gay ;  
 The waiting Moth ne'er spoil'd my best Array ;  
 The Cause was this, I wore it ev'ry Day.

'Twas when fresh *May* her early Blossoms  
 This Clerk and I were walking in the Fields. <sup>[yields,</sup>  
 We grew so intimate, I can't tell how,  
 I pawn'd my Honour, and engag'd my Vow,  
 If e'er I laid my Husband in his Urn,  
 That He, and only He, should serve my turn.  
 We strait struck Hands, the Bargain was agreed;  
 I still have Shifts against a Time of Need:  
 The Mouse that always trusts to one poor Hole,  
 Can never be a Mouse of any Soul.  
 I vow'd, I scarce could sleep since first I knew  
 And durst be sworn he had bewitch'd me to him; <sup>[him,</sup>  
 If e'er I slept, I dream'd of him alone,  
 And Dreams foretel, as learned Men have shown:  
 All this I said; but Dream, Sirs, I had none:  
 I follow'd but my crafty Crony's Lore,  
 Who bid me tell this Lye --- and twenty more.  
 Thus Day by Day, and Month by Month we  
 It pleas'd the Lord to take my Spouse at last. <sup>[past;</sup>

I tore

I tore my Gown, I soil'd my Locks with Dust,  
 And beat my Breasts, as wretched Widows--must.  
 Before my Face my Handkerchief I spread,  
 To hide the Flood of Tears I did --- not shed.  
 The good Man's Coffin to the Church was borne;  
 Around, the Neighbours, and my Clerk too mourn.  
 But as he march'd, good Gods ! he shew'd a Pair  
 Of Legs and Feet, so clean, so strong, so fair !  
 Of twenty Winters Age he seem'd to be ;  
 I (to say Truth) was twenty more than he :  
 But vig'rous still, a lively buxom Dame ;  
 And had a wond'rous Gift to quench a Flame.  
 A Conj'rer once, that deeply could divine,  
 Assur'd me, *Mars* in *Taurus* was my Sign.  
 As the Stars order'd, such my Life has been :  
 Alas, alas, that ever Love was Sin !  
 Fair *Venus* gave me Fire, and sprightly Grace,  
 And *Mars* Assurance, and a dauntless Face.  
 By virtue of this pow'rful Constellation,  
 I follow'd always my own Inclination.

But

But to my Tale : A Month scarce pass'd away,  
 With Dance and Song we kept the nuptial Day.  
 All I possess'd, I gave to his Command,  
 My Goods and Chattels, Money, House and Land :  
 But oft' repented, and repent it still,  
 He prov'd a Rebel to my sov'reign Will :  
 Nay once, by Heav'n, he struck me on the Face,  
 Hear but the Fact, and judge yourselves the Case.

Stubborn as any Lions was I;  
 And knew full well to raise my Voice on high;  
 As true a Rambler as I was before,  
 And would be so, in spite of all he swore.  
 He, against this right sagely would advise,  
 And old Examples set before my Eyes,  
 Tell how the *Roman* Matrons led their Life,  
 Of *Gracchus*' Mother, and *Duilius*' Wife;  
 And chose the Sermon, as becom'd his Wit,  
 With some grave Sentence out of holy Writ,  
 Oft would he say, "Who builds his House on  
 [Sands,  
 " Pricks his blind Horse across the fallow Lands;

" Or



“ Or lets his Wife abroad with Pilgrims roam,  
 “ Deserves a Fool's Cap and long Ears at home.”  
 All this avail'd not : For whoe'er he be  
 That tells my Faults, I hate him mortally :  
 And so do Numbers more, I'll boldly say,  
 Men, Women, Clergy, Regular and Lay.

My Sponse (who was, you know, to Learning  
 A certain Treatise off at Evening read, <sup>[bred]</sup>  
 Where divers Authors (whom the Dev'l confound  
 For all their Lyes) were in one Volume bound,  
*Valerius*, whole ; and of *St. Jerome*, part ;  
*Chrysippus* and *Tertullian*, *Ovid's Art*,  
*Solomon's Proverbs*, *Eloisa's Loves* ;  
 And many more than sure the Church approves,  
 More Legends were there here, of wicked Wives,  
 Than good, in all the Bible and Saints Lives,  
 Who drew the Lion vanquish'd ? 'Twas a Man,  
 But could we Women write as Scholars can,  
 Men should stand mark'd with far more Wicked-  
 Than all the Sons of *Adam* could redress. <sup>[nefs,</sup>

Love

Love seldom haunts the Breast where Learning  
 And *Venus* sets e're *Mercury* can rise.

Those play the Scholars who can't play the Men,  
 And use that Weapon which they have, their Pen;  
 When old, and past the Relish of Delight,  
 Then down they sit, and in their Dotage write,  
 That not one Woman keeps her Marriage-Vow.

(This by the way, but to my Purpose now.)

It chanc'd, my Husband, on a Winter's Night,  
 Read in this Book aloud, with strange Delight,  
 How the first Female (as the Scriptures show)  
 Brought her own Spouse and all his Race to Woe;  
 How *Sampson* fell; and he whom *Dejanire*  
 Wrapp'd in th' invenom'd Shirt, and set on fire;  
 How curs'd *Eryphile* her Lord betray'd,  
 And the dire Ambush *Clytemnestra* laid.

But what most pleas'd him, was the *Cretan* Dame,  
 And Husband-Bull --- oh monstrous! fie for shame!

He had by heart the whole Detail of Woe

*Xantippe* made her good Man undergo.

How

How oft' she scolded in a Day, he knew,  
How many Piss-pots on the Sage she threw;  
Who took it patiently, and wip'd his Head;  
*Rain follows Thunder*, that was all he said.

He read, how *Arius* to his Friend complain'd,  
A fatal Tree was growing in his Land,  
On which three Wives successively had twin'd  
A sliding Noose, and waver'd in the Wind.

"Where grows this Plant (reply'd the Friend) oh  
For better Fruit did never Orchard bear:" <sup>[where?]</sup>

"Give me some Slip of this most blissful Tree,  
"And in my Garden planted shall it be."

Then how two Wives their Lord's Destruction  
Thro' Hatred one, and one thro' too much Love; <sup>[prove,</sup>  
That for her Husband mix'd a pois'nous Draught,  
And This, for Lust an am'rous Philtre bought;  
The nimble Juice soon seiz'd his giddy Head,  
Frantick at Night, and in the Morning dead.

How some with Swords their sleeping Lords have  
And some have hammer'd Nails into their Brain; <sup>[slain,</sup>

And

And some have drench'd them with a deadly Potion;  
All this he read, and read with great Devotion.

Long time I heard, and swell'd, and blush'd, and  
But when no End of these vile Tales I found, <sup>[frown'd;</sup>  
When still he read, and laugh'd, and read again,  
And half the Night was thus consum'd in vain;  
Provok'd to Vengeance, three large Leaves I tore,  
And with one Buffet fell'd him on the Floor.

With that, my Husband in a Fury rose,  
And down he settled me with hearty Blows.

I groan'd, and lay extended on my Side;

' Oh! thou hast slain me for my Wealth (I cry'd)

' Yet I forgive thee — take my last Embrace —'

He wept, kind Soul! and stoop'd to kiss my Face;

I took him such a Box as turn'd him blue,

Then sigh'd, and cry'd, ' Adieu, my Dear, adieu!'

But after many a hearty Struggle past,

I condescended to be pleas'd at last.

Soon as he said, " My Mistress and my Wife,

" Do what you list, the Term of all your Life,"





He said, and chuckled at his Speech-so smart.

This heard the *Sumner*, nettled to the Heart,

Mad to observe his Brother Leech in Glee;

For rarely two of any Trade agree.

“ Now, by the Arms that hung our Souls to save,

“ A *Fry'r* is still an intermeddling Knave :

“ For, like a Fly, he falls in ev'ry Dish,

“ Be it or Roast, or Boil'd, or Fowl, or Fish :

“ Why stop the Lady in her pleasant Gambole ?

“ And what to thee the Length of her Preamble ?

“ Keep on the Right, or Left, behind, before,

“ Peace, Son of a Mendicant ! Peace, Son of a

“ So ! (quoth the *Fry'r*) Sir *Sumner*, say'st thou <sup>[Whore !]</sup>

“ Faith, we will state Accounts e're far we go. <sup>[so ?]</sup>

“ I of a *Sumner* will a Tale provide,

“ And ev'ry Hand shall shake at ev'ry Side.”

The *Sumner* answer'd, “ I beshrew thy Face.

“ Of many a *Fry'r* can I recount the Case ;

“ And one shall pay thy Malice in Return,

“ E're yet we reach the Town of *Sittingbourne*.”

“ Hold

- " Hold (cry'd our Lordly *Hof*t) you spoil our  
[Sport;  
" Silence, I say; keep Silence in the Court!  
" Will you not let the Woman tell her Tale?  
" Wrangling, like Gossips, drunk with Market-  
[Ale!  
" Come, gentle Dame, our Play is at a stand." ---  
' All ready, Sir, quoth she, at your Command,  
' I'll do the best to please you that I can,  
' If I have Licence from this *worthy* Man.'  
" 'Tis granted, said the *Fry'r*, with holy Leer,  
" And open'd to the Tale a self-sufficient Ear."

*END of the PROLOGUE.*



T H E  
**Desire of W O M A N:**  
 O R, T H E  
**W I F E of B A T H's T A L E.**  
*By Mr. D R Y D E N.*

**I**N Days of Old, when *Arthur* fill'd the Throne,  
 Whose Acts and Fame to Foreign Lands were  
 The little Elfs and little Fairy Queen [blown;  
 Gambol'd on Heaths, and danc'd along the Green;  
 And where the jolly Troop had led the Round,  
 The Grass untrodden rose, and mark'd the Ground:  
 Nor darkling did they glance, the Silver Light  
 Of *Phæbe* serv'd to guide their Steps aright,  
 And, with their Tripping pleas'd, prolong the  
 Her Beams they follow'd, where at full they play'd, [Night.]  
 Nor longer than she shed her Horns they stay'd:  
 From thence with airy Flight to Foreign Lands  
[convey'd.]  
Above

F 3

This

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This makes the Fairy Choirs forsake the Place,

When once 'tis hallow'd with the Rites of Grace:

But in the Walks where wicked Elves have been,

The Learning of the Parish now is seen,

The Midnight Parson posting o'er the Green,

With Gown tuck'd up to Wakes; for *Sunday*

With humming Ale encouraging his Text;

Nor wants the holy Leer to Country-Girl betwixt,

From Fiends and Imps he sets the Village free,

There haunts not any *Incubus* but He.

The Maids and Women need no Danger fear

To walk by Night, and Sanctity so near:

For by some Hay-cock, or some shady Thorn,

He bids his Beads both Even-song and Morn.

It so befel in this King *Arthur's* Reign,

A lusty Knight was pricking o'er the Plain;

A Bachelor he was, and of the Courtly Train.

It happen'd as he rode, a Damsel gay

In Ruffet Robes to Market took her Way.

Soon



Soen on the Girl he cast an am'rous Eye,  
 So straight she walk'd, and on her Pasterns high :  
 If seeing her behind he lik'd her Pace,  
 Now turning short, he better lik'd her Face :  
 He 'lights in haste, and, full of youthful Fire,  
 By Force accomplish'd his obscene Desire :  
 This done, away he rode, not unesp'y'd ;  
 For swarming at his Back the Country cry'd' ;  
 And, once in View, they never lost the Sight,  
 But seiz'd, and pinion'd brought to Court the  
     Then Courts of Kings were held in high Re-  
     [Knigh.  
 E're made the common Brothels of the Town :  
     [nown,  
 There, Virgins honourable Vows receiv'd,  
 But chaste as Maids in Monasteries liv'd :  
 The King himself, to nuptial Ties a Slave,  
 No bad Example to his Ports gave :  
 And they not bad, but in a vicious Age,  
 Had not, to please the Prince, debauch'd the Stage.

Now what should *Arthur* do? He lov'd the  
     [Knigh;  
 But Sov'reign Monarchs are the Source of Right :

80     *The Desire of WOMAN: Or, the*

Mov'd by the Damsel's Tears and common Cry,  
He doom'd the brutal Ravisher to die.

But fair *Geneura* rose in his Defence,  
And pray'd so hard for Mercy from the Prince,  
That to his Queen the King th' Offender gave,  
And left it in her Pow'r to Kill or Save.

This gracious Act the Ladies all approve,  
Who thought it much, a Man should die for Love;  
And with their Mistress join'd in close Debate,  
(Cov'ring their Kindness with dissembled Hate,)  
If not to free him, to prolong his Fate.

At last agreed, they call'd him by Consent

Before the Queen and Female Parliament :

And the fair Speaker rising from her Chair,

Did thus the Judgment of the House declare :

‘ Sir Knight, tho’ I have ask’d thy Life, yet still

‘ Thy Destiny depends upon my Will :

‘ Nor hast thou other Surety than the Grace

‘ Not due to thee from our offended Race.

! But

' But as our Kind is of a softer Mold,  
 ' And cannot Blood without a Sigh behold,  
 ' I grant thee Life ; reserving still the Pow'r  
 ' To take the Forfeit when I see my Hour ;  
 ' Unless thy Answer to my next Demand  
 ' Shall set Thee free from our avenging Hand :  
 ' The Question, whose Solution I require,  
 ' Is, *What the Sex of Women most desire ?*  
 ' In this Dispute thy Judges are at Strife :  
 ' Beware ; for on thy Wit depends thy Life,  
 ' Yet (lest surpriz'd, unknowing what to say,  
 ' Thou damn thy self) we give thee farther Day :  
 ' A Year is thine, to wander at thy Will,  
 ' And learn from others, if thou want'st the Skill.  
 ' But, not to hold our Proffer turn'd in Scorn,  
 ' Good Sureties will we have for thy Return ;  
 ' That at the Time prefix'd thou shalt obey,  
 ' And at thy Pledges Peril keep thy Day.'

Woe was the Knight at this severe Command !  
 But well he knew 'twas bootless to withstand :

The

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The Terms accepted, as the Fair ordain,  
He put in Bail for his Return again;  
And promis'd Answer at the Day assign'd,  
The best, with Heav'n's Assistance, he could find.

His Leave thus taken, on his Way he went  
With heavy Heart, and full of Discontent,  
Misdoubting much, and fearful of th' Event,  
'Twas hard the Truth of such a Point to find,  
As was not yet agreed among the Kind.  
Thus on he went; still anxious more and more,  
Ask'd all he met, and knock'd at ev'ry Door;  
Enquir'd of Men; but made his chief Request  
To learn from Women what they lov'd the best.  
They answer'd each according to her Mind,  
To please herself, not all the Female Kind.  
One was for Wealth, another was for Place;  
Crones, old and ugly, wish'd a better Face;  
The Widow's Wish was, oftentimes to wed;  
The wanton Maids were all for Sport a-Bed.

Some said, the Sex were pleas'd with handsome  
 And some gross Flatt'ry lov'd without Disguise :  
 Truth is, says one, he seldom fails to win,  
 Who flatters well ; for that's our darling Sin.  
 But long Attendance, and a duteous Mind,  
 Will work ev'n with the Wisest of our Kind.  
 One thought the Sexes prime Felicity  
 Was from the Bonds of Wedlock to be free :  
 Their Pleasures, Hours, and Actions all their own,  
 And uncontroll'd to give Account to none.  
 Some with a Husband-Fool ; but such are curst,  
 For Fools perverse, of Husbands are the worst :  
 All Women would be counted Chaste and Wise ;  
 Nor should our Spouses see, but with our Eyes :  
 For Fools will prate ; and tho' they want the Wit  
 To find close Faults, yet open Blots will hit :  
 Tho' better for their Ease to hold their Tongue,  
 For Womankind was never in the Wrong.  
 So Noise ensues, and Quarrels last for Life ;  
 The Wife abhors the Fool, the Fool the Wife.

And



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And some Men say, that great Delight have we  
To be for Truth extoll'd, and Secrecy ;  
And constant in one Purpose still to dwell,  
And not our Husband's Counsels to reveal.  
But that's a Fable ; for our Sex is frail,  
Inventing rather than not tell a Tale,  
Like leaky Sieves, no Secrets we can hold :  
Witness the famous Tale that *Ovid* told.

*Midas* the King, as in his Book appears,  
By *Phæbus* was endow'd with Asses Ears,  
Which under his long Locks he well conceal'd,  
(As Monarchs Vices must not be reveal'd)  
For fear the People have 'em in the Wind,  
Who long ago were neither Dumb nor Blind ;  
Nor apt to think from Heav'n their Title springs,  
Since *Jove* and *Mars* left off begetting Kings ;  
This *Midas* knew ; and durst communicate  
To none but to his Wife, his Ears of State.  
One must be trusted, and he thought her fit,  
As passing prudent, and a parlous Wit.

To this sagacious Confessor he went,  
 And told her what a Gift the Gods had sent;  
 But told it under Matrimonial Seal,  
 With strict Injunction never to reveal.  
 The Secret heard, she plighted him her Troth  
 (And sacred, sure, is ev'ry Woman's Oath)  
 The Royal Malady should rest unknown,  
 Both for her Husband's Honour and her own:  
 But ne'ertheless she pin'd with Discontent;  
 The Counsel rumbled till it found a Vent.  
 The Thing, she knew, she was oblig'd to hide;  
 By Int'rest and by Oath the Wife was ty'd;  
 But if she told it not, the Woman dy'd.  
 Loth to betray a Husband and a Prince,  
 But she must burst, or blab; and no Pretence  
 Of Honour ty'd her Tongue from Self-Defence.  
 A marshy Ground commodiously was near;  
 Thither she ran, and held her Breath for fear,  
 Left if a Word she spoke of any thing,  
 That Word might be the Secret of the King.

Thus, full of Counsel, to the Fen she went,  
 Grip'd all the Way, and longing for a Vent :  
 Arriv'd, by pure Necessity compell'd,  
 On her majestic Marrow-bones she kneel'd ;  
 Then to the Waters-brink she laid her Head,  
 And, as a *Bittour* bumps within a Reed,  
 ' To thee alone, O Lake, she said, I tell  
 ' (And, as thy Queen, command thee to conceal)  
 ' Beneath his Locks the King my Husband wears  
 ' A goodly Royal Pair of Asses Ears.  
 ' Now I have eas'd my Bosom of the Pain,  
 ' Till the next longing Fit returns again !'

Thus thro' a Woman was the Secret known ;  
 Tell us, and in Effect you tell the Town.  
 But, to my Tale : The Knight with heavy Cheer,  
 Wandring in vain, had now consum'd the Year :  
 One Day was only left to solve the Doubt ;  
 Yet knew no more than when he first set out.  
 But home he must ; and as th' Award had been,  
 Yield up his Body Captive to the Queen,

In this despairing State he happ'd to ride,  
 As Fortune led him, by a Forest-side :  
 Lonely the Vale, and full of Horror stood,  
 Brown with the Shade of a religious Wood :  
 When full before him, at the Noon of Night,  
 (The Moon was up, and shot a gleamy Light)  
 He saw a Choir of Ladies in a Round,  
 That featly footing seem'd to skim the Ground :  
 Thus dancing Hand in Hand, so light they were,  
 He knew not where they trod, on Earth or Air.  
 At speed he drove, and came a sudden Guest,  
 In hope where many Women were, at least  
 Some one by chance might answer his Request.  
 But faster than his Horse the Ladies flew,  
 And in a trice were vanish'd out of View.

One only Hag remain'd ; but fouler far  
 Than Grandame Apes in *Indian* Forests are ;  
 Against a wither'd Oak she lean'd her Weight,  
 Propp'd on her trusty Staff, not half upright,  
 And dropp'd an aukward Court'fy to the Knight.

Then

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Then said, " What makes you, Sir, so late abroad

" Without a Guide, and this no beaten Road ?

" Or want you aught that here you hope to find,

" Or travel for some Trouble in your Mind ?

" The last I guess ; and, if I read aright,

" Those of our Sex are bound to serve a Knight :

" Perhaps good Counsel may your Grief assuage ;

" Then tell your Pain : For Wisdom is in Age.

To this the Knight : ' Good Mother, would you

' The secret Cause and Spring of all my Woe ? <sup>[know]</sup>

' My Life must with To-morrow's Light expire,

' Unless I tell *what Women most desire*.

' Now, could you help me at this hard Essay,

' Or for your inborn Goodness, or for Pay ;

' Yours is my Life, redeem'd by your Advice,

' Ask what you please, and I will pay the Price :

' The proudest Kerchief of the Court shall rest

' Well satisfy'd of what they love the best.'

" Plight me thy Faith, quoth she, that what I ask,

" Thy Danger over, and perform'd the Task ;

" That



" That shalt thou give for Hire of thy Demand ;

" Here, take thy Oath, and seal it on my Hand ;

" I warrant thee, on Peril of my Life,

" Thy Word shall please both Widow, Maid, and  
[Wife.

More Words there needed not to move the Knight

To take her Offer, and his Truth to plight.

With that she spread her Mantle on the Ground ;

And, first enquiring whither he was bound,

Bid him not fear, tho' long and rough the Way,

At Court he should arrive e're Break of Day :

His Horse should find the Way without a Guide ;

She said : With Fury they began to ride,

He, on the midst, the Beldam at his Side.

The Horse, what Devil drove I cannot tell ;

But only this, they sped their Journey well :

And all the Way the Crone inform'd the Knight,

How he should answer the Demand aright.

To Court they came : The News was quickly  
[spread ;

Of his returning to redeem his Head.

90 *The Desire of WOMAN: Or, the*

The Female Senate was assembled soon,

With all the Mob of Women in the Town:

The Queen sate Lord Chief Justice of the Hall,

And bade the Crier cite the Criminal.

The Knight appear'd, and Silence they proclaim,

Then first the *Culprit* answer'd to his Name:

And, after Forms of Law, was last requir'd

To name the Thing that Women most desir'd.

Th' Offender, taught his Lesson by the Way,

And by his Counsel order'd what to say,

Thus bold began: "My Lady Liege (said he)

"What all your Sex desire, is *Sov'reignty*:

"The Wife affects her Husband to command;

"All must be hers, both Money, House and Land.

"The Maids are Mistresses ev'n in their Name;

"And of their Servants full Dominion claim.

"This, at the Peril of my Head, I say,

"A blunt plain Truth, The Sex aspires to Sway,

"You to rule all, while we, like Slaves, obey."

There

There was not one, or Widow, Maid, or Wife,  
 But said, the Knight had well deserv'd his Life.  
 Ev'n fair *Geneura*, with a Blush, confess'd  
 The Man had found what Women love the best.

Up starts the Beldam, who was there unseen,  
 And, Rev'rence made, accosted thus the Queen:  
 ' My Liege, said she, before the Court arise,  
 ' May I, poor Wretch, find Favour in your Eyes,  
 ' To grant my just Request? 'T was I who taught  
 ' The Knight this Answer, and inspir'd his Thought;  
 ' None but a Woman could a Man direct  
 ' To tell us Women, what we most affect,  
 ' But first I swore him on his Knightly Troth,  
 ' (And here demand Performance of his Oath)  
 ' To grant the Boon that next I should desire:  
 ' He gave his Faith, and I expect my Hire:  
 ' My Promise is fulfill'd: I sav'd his Life,  
 ' And claim his Debt, to take me for his Wife.  
 The Knight was ask'd, nor could his Oath deny,  
 But hop'd they would not force him to comply.

The Women, who would rather wrest the Laws,  
Than let a Sister-Plaintiff lose the Cause,

(As Judges on the Bench more gracious are,  
And more attent to Brothers of the Bar)

Cry'd one and all, the Suppliant should have  
And to the Grandame-Hag adjudg'd the Knight. <sup>[Right,</sup>

In vain he sigh'd, and oft' with Tears desir'd  
Some reasonable Sute might be requir'd.

But still the Crone was constant to her Note;

The more he spoke, the more she stretch'd her  
In vain he proffer'd all his Goods, to save <sup>[Throat.</sup>

His Body, destin'd to that living Grave.

The liqu'rish Hag rejects the Pelf with Scorn:

And nothing but the Man would serve her Turn.

' Not all the Wealth of Eastern Kings, said she,

' Have Pow'r to part my plighted Love and me:

' And Old, and Ugly as I am, and Poor,

' Yet never will I break the Faith I swore!

' For mine thou art by Promise, during Life,

' And I thy loving and obedient Wife.'

" My Love ! Nay, rather my Damnation Thou,

" Said he ; nor am I bound to keep my Vow :

" The Fiend, thy Sire, has sent thee from below,

" Else how could'st thou my secret Sorrows know ?

" Avant, old Witch ; for I renounce thy Bed :

" The Queen may take the Forfeit of my Head, }

" E're any of my Race so foul a Crone shall }  
wed.

Both heard, the Judge pronounc'd against the  
[Knight,

So was he marry'd in his own despite :

And all Day after hid him as an Owl,

Not able to sustain a Sight so foul.

Perhaps the Reader thinks I do him Wrong,

To pass the Marriage-Feast and Nuptial Song :

Mirth there was none, the Man was *a-la-mort*,

And little Courage had to make his Court.

To Bed they went, the Bridegroom and the Bride :

Was never such an ill-pair'd Couple ty'd.

Restless, he toss'd and tumbled to and fro,

And roll'd and wriggled further off for Woe.



94 *The Desire of WOMAN: Or, the*

The good old Wife lay smiling by his Side,  
 And caught him in her quiv'ring Arms, and cry'd;  
 ' When you my ravish'd Predecessor saw, }  
 ' You were not then become this Man of Straw; }  
 ' Had you been such, you might have 'scap'd }  
 ' Is this the Custom of King *Arthur's* Court? [the Law.]  
 ' Are all Round-Table Knights of such a Sort?  
 ' Remember I am she who sav'd your Life,  
 ' Your loving, lawful, and complying Wife:  
 ' Not thus you swore in your unhappy Hour,  
 ' Nor I for this Return employ'd my Pow'r.  
 ' In time of Need I was your faithful Friend;  
 ' Nor did I since, nor ever will offend.  
 ' Believe me, my lov'd Lord, 'tis much unkind;  
 ' What Fury has possess'd your alter'd Mind?  
 ' Thus on my Wedding-Night --- without Pre-  
 ' Come, turn this Way, or tell me my Offence. [tence---  
 ' If not your Wife, let Reason's Rule persuade;  
 ' Name but my Fault, Amends shall soon be made.

" Amends!

" Amends ! Nay, that's impossible, said he ;

" What Change of Age or Ugliness can be ?

" Or, could *Medea's* Magick mend thy Face,

" Thou art descended from so mean a Race,

" That never Knight was match'd with such  
[Disgrace.]

" What Wonder, Madam, if I move my Side,

" When, if I turn, I turn to such a Bride ?"

' And is this all that troubles you so fore ?

" And, what the Devil could'st thou wish me more ?"

' Ah, *Benedicite !* reply'd the Crone :

' Then Cause of just Complaining you have none.

' The Remedy to this were soon apply'd,

' Wou'd you be like the Bridegroom to the Bride.

' But (for you say, a long-descended Race,

' And Wealth and Dignity, and Pow'r and Place,

' Make Gentlemen, and that your high Degree

' Is much disparag'd to be match'd with me ;)

' Know this, my Lord, Nobility of Blood

' Is but a glitt'ring and fallacious Good :

- ' The Nobleman is he, whose noble Mind
- ' Is fill'd with inborn Worth, unborrow'd from
- ' The King of Heav'n was in a Manger laid, <sup>[his Kind.</sup>
- ' And took his Earth but from an humble Maid ;
- ' Then what can Birth, or mortal Men bestow ?
- ' Since Floods no higher than their Fountains flow.
- ' We, who for Name and empty Honour strive,
- ' Our true Nobility from him derive.
- ' Your Ancestors, who puff your Mind with Pride,
- ' And vast Estates to mighty Titles ty'd,
- ' Did not your Honour, but their own advance ;
- ' For Virtue comes not by Inheritance.
- ' If you tralineate from your Father's Mind,
- ' What are you else but of a Bastard-kind ?
- ' Do as your great Progenitors have done,
- ' And by your Virtues prove yourself their Son.
- ' No Father can infuse, or Wit or Grace ;
- ' A Mother comes across, and marrs the Race.
- ' A Grandfire or a Grandame taints the Blood ;
- ' And seldom three Descents continue Good.

' Were

' Were Virtue by Descent, a noble Name  
 ' Could never villanize his Father's Fame;  
 ' But as the first, the last of all the Line  
 ' Would, like the Sun, ev'n in Descending shine.  
 ' Take Fire, and bear it to the darkeſt Houſe  
 ' Betwixt King *Arthur's* Court and *Caucasus*,  
 ' If you depart, the Flame ſhall ſtill remain,  
 ' And the bright Blaze enlighten all the Plain :  
 ' Nor, till the Fuel periſh, can decay,  
 ' By Nature form'd on Things combuſtible to  
 ' Such is not Man, who mixing better Seed <sup>[prey.]</sup>  
 ' With worſe, begets a baſe degen'rate Breed :  
 ' The Bad corrupts the Good, and leaves behind  
 ' No Trace of all the great Begetter's Mind.  
 ' The Father ſinks within his Son, we ſee,  
 ' And often riſes in the third Degree :  
 ' If better Luck a better Mother give ;  
 ' Chance gave us Being, and by Chance we live.

{ Such

98 *The Desire of WOMAN: Or, the*

- Such as our Atoms were, ev'n such are we, }  
 • Or call it Chance, or strong Necessity, }  
 • Thus, loaded with dead Weight, the Will is }  
 • And thus it needs must be: For Seed conjoin'd }  
 • Lets into Nature's Work th' imperfect Kind: }  
 • But Fire, th' Enliv'ner of the gen'ral Frame, }  
 • Is One, its Operations still the same. }  
 • Its Principle is in itself: While ours }  
 • Works, as Confed'rates war, with mingled Pow'rs: }  
 • Or Man, or Woman, whichsoever fails: }  
 • And, oft', the Vigour of the worse prevails, }  
 • *Æther* with *Sulphur* blended alters Hue, }  
 • And casts a dusky Glean of *Sodom* blue. }  
 • Thus in a Brute, their ancient Honour ends, }  
 • And the fair Mermaid in a Fish descends: }  
 • The Line is gone; no longer Duke or Earl; }  
 • But, by himself degraded, turns a Churl. }  
 • Nobility of Blood is but Renown }  
 • Of thy great Fathers, by their Virtue known, }  
 • And a long Trail of Light to thee descending }  
 • If

[down.]



' If in thy Smoke it ends, their Glories shine;  
 ' But Infamy and Villanage are thine.  
 ' Then what I said before is plainly show'd,  
 ' The true Nobility proceeds from God:  
 ' Not left us by Inheritance, but gi'n  
 ' By Bounty of our Stars, and Grace of Heav'n,  
 ' Thus from a Captive *Servius Tullus* rose,  
 ' Whom for his Virtues the first *Romans* chose:  
 ' *Fabritius* from their Walls repell'd the Foe,  
 ' Whose noble Hands had exercis'd the Plough.  
 ' From hence, my Lord and Love, I thus con-  
 ' That tho' my homely Ancestors were rude, <sup>[clude,</sup>  
 ' Mean as I am, yet I may have the Grace  
 ' To make you Father of a gen'rous Race:  
 ' And Noble then am I, when I begin,  
 ' In Virtue cloth'd, to cast the Rags of Sin:  
 ' If Poverty be my upbraided Crime,  
 ' And you believe in Heav'n, there was a time  
 ' When He, the great Controller of our Fate,  
 ' Deign'd to be Man, and liv'd in low Estate:

: Which

100 *The Desire of WOMAN: Or, the*

- \* Which he, who had the World at his Dispose,
- \* If Poverty were Vice, would never choose.
- \* Philosophers have said, and Poets sing,
- \* *That a glad Poverty's an honest Thing.*
- \* Content is Wealth, the Riches of the Mind ;
- \* And happy He who can that Treasure find.
- \* But the base Miser starves amidst his Store,
- \* Broods on his Gold, and griping still at more, }
- \* Sits sadly pining, and believes he's poor.
- \* The ragged Beggar, tho' he wants Relief,
- \* Has not to lose, and *sings before the Thief.*
- \* Want is a bitter and a hateful Good,
- \* Because its Virtues are not understood :
- \* Yet many Things, impossible to Thought,
- \* Have been by Need to full Perfection brought :
- \* The Daring of the Soul proceeds from thence,
- \* Sharpness of Wit, and active Diligence :
- \* Prudence at once, and Fortitude it gives,
- \* And, if in Patience ta'en, it mends our Lives :

' For ev'n that Indigence that brings me low,  
 ' Makes me Myself, and Him above to know.  
 ' A Good which none would challenge, few would  
 ' A fair Possession, which Mankind refuse, [choose;  
 ' If we from Wealth to Poverty descend;  
 ' Want gives to know the Flatt'rer from the Friend.  
 ' If I am Old and Ugly, well for you;  
 ' No lewd Adult'rer will my Love pursue.  
 ' Nor Jealousy, the Bane of Marry'd Life,  
 ' Shall haunt you, for a wither'd homely Wife:  
 ' For Age and Ugliness, as all agree,  
 ' Are the best Guards of Female Chastity.

' Yet, since I see your Mind is worldly bent,  
 ' I'll do my best to further your Content.  
 ' And therefore, of two Gifts in my Dispose,  
 ' Think ere you speak, I grant you Leave to  
 ' Would you I should be still Deform'd and Old, [choose:  
 ' Nauseous to touch, and loathsome to behold,  
 ' On this Condition, to remain for Life  
 ' A careful, tender, and obedient Wife,

In

- ‘ In all I can contribute to your Ease,
- ‘ And not in Deed, or Word, or Thought displease?
- ‘ Or, would you rather have me Young and Fair,
- ‘ And take the Chance that happens to your Share?
- ‘ Temptations are in Beauty, and in Youth;
- ‘ And how can you depend upon my Truth?
- ‘ Now weigh the Danger with the doubtful Bliss,
- ‘ And thank yourself, if aught should fall amiss.’

Sore sigh’d the Knight, who this long Sermon  
At length, considering all, his Heart he cheer’d; <sup>[heard:]</sup>

And thus reply’d: “ My Lady, and my Wife,

“ To your wife Conduct I resign my Life:

“ Choose you for me; for well you understand

“ The future Good and Ill on either Hand:

“ But, if an humble Husband may request,

“ Provide, and order all Things for the best; <sup>[choose:]</sup>

“ Yours be the Care to profit, and to please;

“ And let your Subject-Servant take his Ease.”

‘ Then thus in Peace, quoth she, concludes the

‘ Since I am turn’d the Husband, you the Wife: <sup>[Strife,</sup>

al

‘ The

- ‘ The Matrimonial Victory is mine ;
- ‘ Which, having fairly gain’d, I will resign.
- ‘ Forgive, if I have said or done amiss,
- ‘ And seal the Bargain with a friendly Kiss :
- ‘ I promis’d you but one Content to share ;
- ‘ But now I will become both Good and Fair.
- ‘ No nuptial Quarrel shall disturb your Ease,
- ‘ The Business of my Life shall be to please.
- ‘ And for my Beauty, that as Time shall try ;
- ‘ But draw the Curtain first, and cast your Eye.’

He look’d, and saw a Creature heav’nly fair,  
 In Bloom of Youth, and of a charming Air.  
 With Joy he turn’d, and seiz’d her Iv’ry Arm ;  
 And, like *Pygmalion*, found the Statue warm.  
 Small Arguments there needed to prevail,  
 A Storm of Kisses pour’d as thick as Hail.  
 Thus, long in mutual Bliss they lay embrac’d,  
 And their first Love continu’d to the last :  
 One Sunshine was their Life ; no Cloud between ;  
 Nor ever was a kinder Couple seen,

And



And so may all our Lives like theirs be led;  
 Heav'n send the Maids young Husbands, fresh in  
 May Widows wed as often as they can,  
 And ever for the better change their Man.  
 And some devouring Plague pursue their Lives,  
 Who will not well be govern'd by their Wives.

**END of the WIFE of BATH's TALE.**



# PROLOGUE

TO THE

## FRYAR'S TALE.

By Mr. OGLE.

FULL, on the *Summer*, lour'd the *Licenc'd Fry'r*,  
And, suffocating, boil'd and burn'd with fire.

Yet, caution'd by our *Hof*, nor Rule he broke,

Nor, till the *Dame* had finish'd, Word he spoke.

Then threw he, as he thought, a lucky Hit;

For, of his House, he was a parlous Wit.

" Dame, you have led, (quoth He) a merry

" Happy the Man, that marries such a Wife!

" Wedlock's a knotty Point, I must declare;

" But you have touch'd it to a single Hair:

H

" And

- " And, may I die, tho' canvass'd in the Schools,  
 " 'Twas never settled yet by juster Rules.  
 " Here let me only tell you, by the way,  
 " Tho' right in most that you was pleas'd to say,  
 " Yet in your free Citations you are wrong ;  
 " 'Tis little less than Petulance of Tongue.  
 " Beneath your Feet be the Sixth Husband trod ;  
 " But use with due Respect the Word of God.  
 " 'Tis what no Layman should presume to name :  
 " But, for a Woman --- Madam, fye, for Shame !  
 " Texts and Authorities are sacred Mines :  
 " Leave Quoting Scripture, to Us sound Divines.  
 " Ev'n I myself a *Sumner's* Story chuse,  
 " Not aiming to instruct you, but amuse.  
 " Nam'd I a *Sumner* ? be it understood,  
 " I mean not, of the Man, to say much Good :  
 " Like *Tyburn-Jack*, you know him by his Sta-  
 " A *Sumner* is a Bawd for Fornication !"  
 ' Hold ! said our *Host*, a *Churchman* should be  
 ' A *Christian* you ! and with such Rancour speak ?

' Be courteous, humble, as becomes a Priest ;

' Abuse no Friend in Company at least.

' This the Forbearance of a *Fry'r* profess'd?

' Tell on your Tale, and let the *Sumner* rest.'

" Nay, quoth the *Sumner*, give him Length of

" Pardie! my *Staff* shall tally with his *Cope*!

" For I will bring a *Licens'd Fry'r* to View,

" A Pattern He, of all the Fawning Crew.

" The Merit of their Function I will show;

" And where they hold their Office, all shall know."

' No more of this, our *Host* in Fury cry'd :

' Begin, I say, 'Sir *Fry'r*!' The *Fry'r* comply'd.

END of the PROLOGUE.



THE  
 SUMNER and the DEVIL:  
 OR, THE  
 FRYAR's TALE.

By Mr. MARKLAND.

**A** Rigorous Arch-Deacon whilom liv'd,  
 From whom severest Justice Guilt receiv'd ;  
 Him no Evasions ever could elude ;  
 Offending Sinners strictly he pursu'd.  
 But *Fornicators* were in greatest Awe :  
 On them he always put the *Penal Law*.  
 And they whose Tythes were slow of Coming-in,  
 (To cheat the Clergy is a crying Sin !)  
 Them oft with Mulcts pecun'ary he fin'd,  
 Nor let them cheat the Church, howe'er inclin'd.

For



For e're the Bishop caught them with his Hook,  
They were first enter'd in th' Arch-Deacon's Book.

He had a *Summer*, bred to pious Guiles,  
To Fraud, and true Ecclesiastick Wiles;  
To none in Craft inferior; none so fit  
To burlesque Virtue, by defending it.  
Immoral Actions slyly could he trace  
Thro' ev'ry Path of the Dissembler's Maze.  
One or two Leachers He would gently use,  
If they as many *Dozen* would accuse:  
Whene'er a Criminal impeach'd did stand,  
Pimps, Bawds, and sly Informers were at hand:  
Whate'er was urg'd, or Right, or Wrong, they  
And, Conscience-proof, false Witness gladly bore. <sup>[swore,</sup>  
They gave him Informations, not a few,  
Some of imaginary Crimes, some true.  
And new-reviv'd the *Devil's* Part of old,  
First tempted Wretches to offend, then sold.  
For his Advantage they took mighty Pains,  
And shar'd some little Portion of his Gains.

110 *The SUMNER and the DEVIL : Or,*  
His Master thought he most uprightly liv'd,  
Nor ever found wherein he was deceiv'd.  
Oft' would he issue Summons without Leave,  
And ample Bribes, to drop the Cause, receive.  
For when Men stand in danger of a Curse,  
Who, to preserve his Soul, would grudge his  
Thus run he on, intrepid in Deceit, [Purse?  
Nor fear'd to be detected of the Cheat.  
*He was (to give him his undoubted Laud)*  
A downright *Thief*, a *Sumner*, and a *Bawd*.

Right true-bred Whores he always kept in Pay,  
Who sily told if any went astray.  
No sooner did he know th' Offender's Name,  
But out a forg'd *Mandamus* quickly came :  
For diff'rent Ends the guilty Two appear;  
Her, her own Profit brings; Him, conscious Fear.  
Th' Event, as he design'd, was still the same,  
The Man to pill, but to excuse the Dame.  
Then smoothly would he cry, " Your honest Look  
" Prevails; I'll cross you in th' Arch-deacon's Book,



"Henceforth beware, and never more offend;

"Believe me, much I hazard for my Friend."

Thus gravely poor Delinquent would he fright,

Till a sufficient Bribe set all things right.

Thus did his Whores his heedless Neighbours treat,

Giving four Sauce--- whatever was the Meat.

It so befel, that on a certain Day,

This *Sumner*, ever waiting for his Prey,

Tow'rds a poor *Widow's*, with a Summons went;

Whate'er the Cause, a Bribe was the Intent.

And riding gently by a Forest-side,

A jolly Yeoman he before him spy'd,

Whose dapple Grey in haughty manner pranc'd,

And to the Musick of his own Hoofs danc'd.

The *Sumner* kindly hail'd; He gently smil'd,

And greeted him with Salutation mild.

The Yeoman ask'd, "Proceed you far to day?"

'No, said the *Sumner*, but a little Way!

'At a small Distance hence, is my Intent,

'To gather for my Lord a little Rent.'

112 *The SUMNER and the DEVIL: Or,*

"Are you a Steward then?" the Yeoman said:

He answer'ing, 'Yes,' conceal'd his proper Trade:

He was a little modest; and, for Shame,

Would not profess th' unrespectable Name.

"A Steward! said the Yeoman; Let us greet,

"I'm over-joy'd a Brother here to meet:

"For I'm a Steward too, no less than Thou,

"Tho' in this Country unacquainted now.

"Howe'er, I hope, we shall familiar grow,

"When we each other somewhat better know.

"Then, prithee, mutual Friendship let us swear,

"Silver and Gold I have enough to spare.

"And if you hap to come within our Shire,

"All shall be thine, right as thou wilt desire."

'Done, quoth the *Sumner*, Brotherhood I swear;

'Henceforth a mutual Friendship let us bear.

'And whoso'er in Love is first remiss,

'Partake he nought of Heav'n's eternal Bliss.'

Thus travell'd they together, Side by Side,

The *Sumner* pleas'd, the *Yeoman* satisfy'd.

The *Summer* next began t' inquire his Name,

' Whither his Journey tended ? Whence he came ?

' And where, said he, may I a Visit pay,

' If e'er my kinder Fortune lead that way ?'

He answer'd, " Brother, hence, far low, I live,

" Where I to Friends no cold Reception give,

" But of the Road I'll draw you such a Chart,

" You shall not miss the Way --- e'er we depart.

' Now, Brother, quoth the *Summer*, as we ride,

' Since in your Honesty I may confide,

' (Since you're a Steward too) I do beseech,

' That you some fraudulent Arts of Gain would  
[teach.

' Instruct me to make Profits of my Place,

' Without unseasonable Checks of Grace,

' Tell, in mine Office, how I most may win,

' And spare not, or for Conscience, or for Sin.'

" Troth, Brother dear, I'll tell a faithful Tale ;

" My Wages, I confess, are strait and small :

" My

114 *The SUMNER and the DEVIL: Or,*

“ My Lord is Careful, Vigilant, and Close ;

“ And Avarice in all his Actions shows ;

“ Therefore I study first for his Content ;

“ Then levy supernumerary Rent.

“ In short, I chiefly by Extortion live,

“ And gladly pocket what the Tenants give :

“ From Year to Year, I win all my Expence,

“ Sometimes by Slight, sometimes by Violence.

“ I plainly tell my Mind, and nothing spare.”

‘ Right so, the *Sumner* answer’d, I do fare :

‘ My Conscience ne’er prohibits me to get ;

‘ But, Right or Wrong --- *All’s Fish that comes to*  
[*Net,*

‘ But for Extortion, I should surely starve,

‘ And they deserve no Meat, who cannot carve.

‘ Let squeamish Stomachs fly ill-gotten Feasts ;

‘ Give me the Man, that, what he eats, digests.

‘ In short, a thousand Reasons I could give ;

‘ The mighty Law of Nature bids us live, }

‘ And all our Means are honest, if we thrive.

‘ But

- ' But little Need requires that I should preach  
 ' To One, much better qualify'd to teach.  
 ' Well are we met, by holy sweet St. J A M E;  
 ' And, Brother, by your Leave, I crave your  
     [Name.  
     " My Name, the *Yeoman*, smiling, said, I'll tell;  
 " I am a Fiend, my Dwelling is in Hell.  
 " And here I ride about, like you, in Quest,  
 " As you yourself not long ago confess'd.  
 " My Purchase is th' Effect of all my Rent :  
 " And ride not you upon the same Intent?  
 " You seek for Lucre, never caring how :  
 " Just so, with such Design, I travel now."  
 ' Ah! bless us! the affrighted *Sumner* cries,  
 ' How has your Cloven Foot escap'd my Eyes?  
 ' Can you thus shrewdly Mortal Actions ape?  
 ' For You, as well as I, have Human Shape.  
 ' Or serve you any Form determinate,  
 ' Whilst you remain in your Infernal State?  
 " No, certainly, he answer'd, we have none;  
 " But at our Pleasure we can take us one.

" Or



116 *The SUMNER and the DEVIL: Or,*

" Or come an Immaterial, seeming Shape;

" Appear a Boar, a Lyon, Man, or Ape.

" Or like an Angel we can sometimes go:

" Nor is it wond'rous if we can do so;

" When paltry Jugglers can Mankind deceive,

" By Cant assisted, and an open Sleeve.

" What Pow'r is his, who, Master of Hell's

" Can form, on whate'er Shape his Fancy fix?" <sup>[Tricks]</sup>

' But, said the *Sumner*, why do you thus frame

' So various Forms, nor always use the same?"

" Because, quoth he, our Forms we always

" The ready'ft our intended Preys to take. <sup>[make]</sup>

" Nor are we troubled much: The Hope of

" Takes off the Weight of our industr'ous Pains. <sup>[Gains]</sup>

" Sometimes a Glutton-Belly does confine,

" Guzzling us up, instead of Vintners Wine;

" Till, by excessive Drinking over-charg'd,

" The Gorge o'erflows, and we're again enlarg'd,

" Those who enjoy us, We by turns entrap,

" And many a Drunkard proves the *Devil's* Chap.

"O"

" Some-

" Sometimes, like Ivory, with number'd Spots, "  
 " We breed loud Strife amongst contentious Sots ;  
 " Or at *Groom-Porter's* (ratling all the Night) "  
 " Brawls, Oaths, and deep-mouth'd Blasphemies  
     [excite ;  
 " Ruine young 'Squires and Tradesmen in a trice :  
 " Hence Men exclaim, *The Devil's in the Dice!*  
 " Oft' rule we Statesmen's, oft' Director's Dreams ;  
 " Hence Plots, Conspiracies, and *South-Sea* Schemes.  
 " When hatch'd Rebellions first are set on foot, "  
 " And Discontent in Subjects Hearts takes Root, "  
 " The Chief, by us beguil'd, destroys their Lives,  
 " And he betrays it first, who first contrives. "  
 " Thus we concerted Projects often state, "  
 " And spoil a Nation's Views of growing Great. "  
 " The greedy Kingdom hugs the airy Cheat, "  
 " And the Directors thrive by the Deceit ; "  
 " Till, having lost the entertaining Hope, "  
 " We leave them to the Mercy of a Rope. "  
 " Some, not unwisely, have th' Occasion guess'd, "  
 " Who, but the *Devil*, could these Things sug-  
     [gest ?  
     " Some-

118 *The SUMNER and the DEVIL: Or,*

" Sometimes expressly Pow'r to us is giv'n,

" And we are made the Instruments of Heav'n.

" The Body by Afflictions oft' we tempt;

" But the immortal Soul is still exempt.

" Sometimes by black Despair we try the Soul,

" But leave the untouch'd Body healthy, whole.

" Then, if our Arts are vig'rously withstood,

" Man's former Evils turn to future Good.

" The Slaves to Man we oftentimes are made,

" As when the great Apostle I obey'd:

" Nor dare we their superior Pow'r oppose;

" Thus *Dunstan* took the *Devil* by the Nose."

' But, said the *Sumner*, do you always thus

' Make Forms substantial when you visit us?"

" No, no, the *Fiend* reply'd, sometimes we

" And but appear imaginary Men. <sup>[feign,</sup>

" As, when thro' clefted Floorings we arise,

" And, vanishing, beguile poor Mortals Eyes.

" Sometimes from Graves dead Carcasses we hire,

" To answer what our Votaries require ;

" And

" And dark Futurity with Truth foretel,

" As formerly the Witch rais'd *Samuel*;

" Yet boldly some aver, it was not He;

" But I'll not here enforce Divinity.

" Yet Thee with sober Seriousness I warn,

" Thou wilt e'er-while have little Cause to learn;

" For I have Hopes, my dearest Friend to see,

" Where 'twill be needless to inquire of Me.

" But let us on: I've travell'd all the Day,

" Without the smallest Hopes of any Prey:

" If now my Company you will receive,

" Forward I'll ride, until your Friend you leave."

' Nay, said the *Sumner*, that shall ne'er betide,

' My well-try'd Honesty is known full wide:

' I will preserve my faithful Promise well,

' Altho' thou wert the Emperor of Hell.

' Friends we'll continue, as we lately sware,

' And by Accord our Booty thus we'll share:

' Content yourself with whatsoe'er you gain,

' And I'll receive the Product of my Brain.

But

' But if one of us should have more than t'other,

' Let him be true, and part it with his Brother?

" With all my Heart, the *Devil* answer'd

" Hence quickly; let's pursue our better Fate." <sup>[straight,</sup>

Thus they proceed, till coming near a Town

(Plac'd in a miry Valley, deeply down)

They met a Cart, full heavy charg'd with Hay,

The Carter driving thro' a dirty Way.

Deep were the Tracks, uneven was the Road,

And the tir'd Horses droop'd beneath the Load:

The Carter strove, and plentifully smote,

' What, are you jaded? Stir you not a Foot?

' The Dev'l himself e'en carry you away;

' I freely give him Horses, Cart and Hay.

The *Sumner* list'ning, to his Friend drew near,

And, smiling, told him softly in his Ear,

' Harken, my Brother, you have got a Prey;

' Did you not hear th' unthinking Carter say,

' He gave 'em you?— Prevent a second Word;

' No better Prey your Fortune will afford.

" Nay,



" Nay, quoth the *Devil*, 'tis not his Intent;

" Whate'er he said, far otherwise he meant.

" Ask him yourself, if you believe not me;

" Or stay a little longer here, and see."

Th' impatient Carter, joining all his Force,

With utmost Fury whipp'd the foremost Horse.

He stopp'd, and stretch'd, and quickly freed the

' Heit! said the Carter, Blessings on thy Heart! <sup>[Carter]</sup>

' Well hast thou drawn, and freed us at a Jerk;

' *Jesu*, preserve thee, for thy helpful Work.

" Now, said the *Devil*, credit what I told;

" I knew his Words, their Purport would not hold;

" Whate'er he spake, he never did design:

" Thus Words and Actions very seldom join.

" But let us forward towards yonder Plains;

" Here we but get our Labour for our Pains."

No sooner past the Town a little Way,

The *Sumner* call'd, ' My dearest Brother, stay;

' Here lives a Widow in this little House,

' Would sooner dye, than give away a Soue.

- ‘ Observe how furiously she’ll rant and swear ;
- ‘ I’ll extort Twelve-pence, tho’ I leave her bare.
- ‘ That I’ve th’ Arch-deacon’s Summons I’ll pre-  
[tend,
- ‘ Altho’ I never knew her once offend :
- ‘ Perhaps you know not how we *Sumners* thrive ;
- ‘ So take Example here how well we live.’

The *Sumner* loudly rattled at the Door ;

- ‘ Come out, old Double-Devil, Bawd and Whore ;
- ‘ Come forth, and show yourself, you filthy Beast!
- ‘ What ! you’re solacing with some pamper’d

“ Sweet Sir, reply’d the Widow, what’s your  
[Priest !  
[Will ?”

- ‘ I summon you, he answer’d, by this Bill ;
- ‘ On pain of ’curring, for your Disrespect,
- ‘ You must your Sentence of my Lord expect ;
- ‘ No fine Excuse will palliate this Neglect.

‘ At Nine, to-morrow Morn, precisely come.’

“ Now, Lord ! (said she) I cannot stir from Home,

“ Long Sickness has confin’d me to my Room ;

“ I cannot walk, and less indure to ride,

“ I have such Pains and Pricking in my Side.

“ May

" May I not ask a Libel in this Case,

" And let my Proctor answer in my Place ?

" It won't be represented as Neglect;

" If he may answer what my Foes object."

' My Friendship, he reply'd, I'll let you use;

' For Twelve-pence your Appearance I'll excuse:

' I would not your Expences should be large;

' Or let your Fees run up a needless Charge :

' For Proctors, when they get a Client in,

' Fleece him to Nakedness, to Bones and Skin :

' And thro' all Ages this has been confess'd,

' That Lawyers are but Villains at the best.

' Therefore, that this Affair no Noise may breed,

' And save your Money 'gainst the Time of Need,

' You, for the Sum I mention'd I'll acquit;

' 'Tis more indeed, than e'er I ventur'd yet ;

' And I no more than half the Profit get :

' One Moiety th' Arch-deacon has for Fees ;

' Disbursing therefore Twelve-pence, be at Ease.'

"Heav'n so protect me from all future Sin,

"Said she, if I the Universe should win,

"I have not Twelve-pence I can call my own:

"Alas! I'm needy, and past Labour grown.

"Bestow your Charity on me poor Wretch."

'Fruitless, he answer'd, is this thy idle Fetch?

'I've noted thee, thou old contriving Jilt!

"Yet, she reply'd, I'm ignorant of Guilt."

'Pay me, he loudly cry'd, or by St. *Anne*,

'I'll carry off by downright Force your Pan.

'You were indebted to me long before,

'For being cited when you play'd the Whore.

'I kindly paid your Fees, ungrateful Thrash,

'Or you had smartly undergone the Lash.'

"Thou ly'st (said she) and 'tis a sorry Trick,

"To chouse an honest Woman, poor, and sick.

"Never was I, whilst Widow, Maid, or Wife,

"Summon'd before your Master in my Life.

"Nor was I ever known to have the Way

"Of using filthy Tricks in filthier Play.

"And

" And he that ev'ry Thing doth timely send,

" Take thee—and give thee to the foulest Fiend."

Soon as the Píend her hearty Curfes heard,  
He nearer drew, and asking, thus conferr'd;

" Tell me, my dearest Mother, do you joke,

" Or is this *kindly Wish* in earnest spoke?"

" I speak, said she, with Bitterness of Heart,  
" The *Devil* take him hence before we part,  
" My Pan and all, except he doth repent."

" Nay, quoth the *Sumner*, that's not my Intent.  
" *This Pan I'll never part with*; 'tis my own :  
" Would I possess'd each Rag that thou hast on.  
" Not but, if e'er I apprehended Harm,  
" I would remit your *Smock* -- to keep you warm."

" Now, said the *Devil*, Brother, you shall  
" This Bus'ness I am able best to clear. [hear;

" Our Bargain was, Each freely should possess  
" Whate'er was giv'n him; I expect no less :  
" Your Title to this Pan you must resign ;  
" For by the Owner's Gift 'tis fairly mine.



- " You'll never part with it ; --- Your Word's of  
[Force ;  
" Your Body therefore is my own of course.  
" Besides, I think you equally my Claim,  
" As being giv'n me by this injur'd Dame.  
" Her pow'rful Wishes critically fell ;  
" So, faith, Sir *Sumner*, you may go to Hell."

**END of the *FRYAR's* TALE.**



**PRO-**

# PROLOGUE

TO THE

## SUMNER'S TALE.

By Mr. OGLE.

HERE paus'd the *Fry'r*, to laugh at his own  
[Wit,  
As having sent the *Sumner* down the Pit :

" There lies the Heritage of *Proctors Civil* !

" I give thee, Soul and Body, to the Devil !

But yet, tho' *Priest* of *Priest* has much to say,  
He judg'd it meet, to trim it with the *Lay*.

And having vented first his Spleen and Spite,  
Assum'd the Look, forbearing, and contrite !

" Repent, ye *Sumners* ! Quit this sinful Road !

" Nor make the Fiery Gulph your last Abode !

" And oh ! preserve us He, from Guides so blind,

" Who, after his own Image, form'd Mankind.

" For, of that Tribe had I full Room to speak,  
 " Hell would appear the Mansion that they seek.  
 " This could I prove by Texts, one after one,  
 " To *Mark* from *Matthew*, and from *Luke* to *John*;  
 " And show you, from the very Words of *Christ*,  
 " That Millions perish, by these Fiends intic'd.  
 " *Fathers* and *Councils*, was I here to name,  
 " You'd find no End of everlasting Flame:  
 " For there they draw you by a borrow'd Sign,  
 " Whence *Jesus* turn you, of his Grace Divine.  
 " Then trust not you to a mis-leading Pow'r,  
 " Who, like the *Devil*, still watches to devour,  
 " To *Sumner*, when was high Commission giv'n?  
 " Ev'n He must first *confess*, to go to Heav'n,  
 " No, would you surely 'scape eternal Fire,  
 " A Fry'r your Intercessor make; a Fry'r!  
 " Take *Uction* from a *Mendicant* unshod;  
 " He is the true Ambassador of God."  
 The *Sumner*, while the *Fry'r* his Tale pursu'd,  
 At Heart not easy, view'd him, and review'd.

Rais'd

Rais'd on his Horse, and longing to engage,

He trembled, like an Aspin-Leaf, with Rage.

' Now, Sirs (he said) as with the Fry'r and you

' So bear with me, and I will quit the Score, <sup>[bore,</sup>

' Our good *Licentiate* talks of *Fiends* below, <sup>bna</sup>

' As freely as we talk of *Friends* we know. <sup>W</sup>

' Nor I, to doubt their Intercourse pretend: <sup>U</sup>

' For *Fiend* to *Fry'r*, is just as *Friend* to *Friend*, <sup>I</sup>

' Who has not heard, how, sleeping in his Cell, <sup>A</sup>

' A *Fry'r* was in a Vision rap'd to Hell? <sup>O</sup>

' Where, as an Angel led him up and down, <sup>T</sup>

' He look'd, but could not spy one shaven Crown. <sup>W</sup>

' Numbers of ev'ry Sex and Age he sees, <sup>B</sup>

' All Ranks and Stations, Functions and Degrees, <sup>U</sup>

' Ev'n Crowds of old Acquaintance round him <sup>U</sup>

' Full many a topeing Friend, and tickling Dame. <sup>[came,</sup>

' Now, Sir (quoth he) have *Fry'r's* such gifted <sup>[Grace,</sup>

' That none descend to this infernal Place? <sup>W</sup>

' Not so! (the Angel straight the Point explains)

' Not so! Here Millions suffer endless Pains. <sup>bna</sup>

' Then

- ' Then, down he led him to th' Abyfs profound,  
 ' Where *Satan* lay at stretch along the Ground ;  
 ' So broad his Buttock (not to rouse our Tar--)  
 ' 'Twould measure with a First-rate Man of War ;  
 ' And long, as is a Main-Mast, was his Tail,  
 ' Which, when he cock'd, he look'd a Ship in Sail.  
 ' " Up, Sirrah (cry'd the Angel) *Satan*, rise !  
 " Erect thy Tail ! shew where the *Friery* lies !  
 " A Brother craves the Converse of a Brother !  
 " Ope wide, and let him know his nursing Mo-  
 " Thy Nest of Fry'rs, discharge upon the Wing. <sup>[ther :</sup>  
 " Rise up." And up he rises at a Spring,  
 ' Erects his Tail, to Pow'r superior, meek,  
 ' And opes a Gap, as wide as that of *Peake*.  
 ' Infu'd a rumbling Sound, and Brimstone-Smell,  
 ' Then forth they came in Crowds too large to tell,  
 ' Fry'r urging Fry'r, from out the Devil they drive,  
 ' As fast as Bees that quit a swarming Hive ;  
 ' Full twenty thousand follow'd ev'ry Blast,  
 ' And fast as out they came, went in as fast :



- ‘ For Satan roar’d. “*Fry’rs*, listen to my Call,  
 “ Back to your Dormitory, One and All.”  
 “ All enter’d, Black, or Brown, or White, or  
 “ He elap’d his Tail between, and down he lay. <sup>[Grey.]</sup>  
 ‘ The *Fry’r* long ruminates the darksome Hole,  
 ‘ When, to his Body, God restores his Soul.  
 ‘ The Matin-Bell was founding as he wak’d,  
 ‘ While ev’ry Limb with secret Horror quak’d,  
 ‘ For once, a true Devout, he left his Bed,  
 ‘ So ran the Devil’s Posteriors in his Head.  
 ‘ Whence Heav’n preserve us all, except the *Fry’r*;  
 ‘ Be that the Lot of ev’ry Convent-Lyar.  
 ‘ Nor, Sirs, condemn me, if I turn the Scale :  
 ‘ But, as you took my Prologue, take my Tale.’

**END of the PROLOGUE.**

**THE**

# THE FARMER and the FRYAR:

## OR, THE *Sumner's* TALE.

By Mr. BUDGELL.

WHERE *Humber's* Streams divide the fruit-  
[ful Plain,  
There liv'd a *Fryar* of the Begging Train;  
Who, licenc'd, hypocritically bold,  
Would give his Pray'rs, his Mass, his Heav'n for  
As once, his Gown high-tuck'd, his Scrip new-  
Pois'd on his Staff, he pensive trudg'd along;

A Door stood ope, where oft the Beechen Bowl,  
Smiling with Nut-brown Ale, had cheer'd his Soul:  
Gently he tap'd, then cry'd, " May here Content  
" With Peace for ever dwell !" and in he went.  
Sick lay the *Host* ; the *Fryar* growl'd a Pray'r,  
And with an *Ave Mary* told his Care.

Here

Here down he laid his *Staff*, there hung his *Hat*,  
Brush'd from the *Wicker* Chair the *Tabby* Cat,  
And with a *solemn* Leisure down he sat:

Then thus began: 'To-day I preach'd in Town;

' But kept not servile to the *Text* alone.

' Ah! *Thomas*, had you heard my subtile Wit,

' My *Gloss*, my *Comments* on the Holy Writ;

' Tho' well, I know, 'gainst *Fryars* you incline,

' You'd own that *Fryars* were of *Right Divine*.'

The *Hof* reply'd, 'In *Comments* I've no Skill;

' By *Comments* Priests can prove just what they

' Of Reas'ning deep, some *Clerks* to shew the Force,

' From Head to Head drawl out the long Discourse;

' On this side now, and now on that dispute;

' Are now confuted, now again confute;

' Make *Saint* with *Saint*, *Father* with *Father* vie,

' Till *Glosses* prove the *Scriptures* all a Lie.

" Ab! Friend, the *Fryar* cry'd, youll' nought

" But what your *simple Reason* can conceive:

" Laymen

134 *The FARMER and the FRYAR : Or,*

“ *Laymen* must credit, tho’ the *Doctrine’s new*;

“ The *Text* may vary, but the *Comment’s* true.

The Wife tripp’d in, and stopp’d th’ haranguing  
A Court’fy dropp’d, and welcom’d ev’ry Guest : <sup>[Priest ;</sup>

Slow from the Chair the smiling *Fryar* rose,

And made with aukward Air his solemn Bows :

Nor there he stopp’d ; but to enlarge his Bliss,  
Squeez’d her soft Hand, and smack’d a hearty Kiss.

“ Ah ! Friend (quoth he) how happy is thy Life !

“ Not the whole Town can boast so fair a Wife :

“ At Church I view’d her, as high Mass was said,

“ Soft roll’d her Eye, and gently wav’d her Head,

“ Each Dame was envying, fighting was each Swain,

“ Whilst she shone fairest of the fairer Train.”

The sweetly-simp’ring Dame new Pleasure found,

With greedy Ear imbib’d the flatt’ring Sound :

Prink’d up her Tucker, ev’ry Charm she try’d,

And by her little Arts reveal’d her Pride :

Then thus address’d him : “ Would you taste our <sup>[Cheer ?</sup>

“ The Fare is homely, but the Heart sincere !

“ What

"What could you eat, *Sir*?—" "Nothing (cry'd the  
[Priest])

"But a thin Slice of a fat Capon's Breast ;

"A Brace of Woodcocks, of a Pig the Head,

"With a nice Pudding of the whitest Bread :

"My squeamish Stomach loaths a sumptuous Treat ;

"Learn'd Clerks, who study much, but little eat."

Swift tripp'd the *Dame* away, and seem'd to fly,  
Brisk as a Colt, and jolly as a Pie.

As the *Fry'r*'s Mind on Int'rest chiefly ran,

Absent the Wife, he thus accosts the Man :

"Is not our Order pious ? Ours, which shares

"The Day in Fasting, and the Night in Pray'rs ?

"Than those more pious, whom base Trifles win,

"Who hold Pluralities to be no Sin ?

"For why should Country-Parish claim their Care ?

"Curates perform the Drudgery of Pray'r.

"Tho' their whole Study is t'increase their Store,

"They talk fine Things in Praise of being Poor ;

"With Mock-Humility of Fasting preach ;

"Tho' their fat Sides deny they practise what they

[teach.

" All



136 *The FARMER and the FRYAR: Or,*

" All Priesthood should be meek ; but when there's

" The rosy Prebend, and the pamper'd Dean, [seen

" Stalk to th' expecting Choir with Front clate,

" In all the Grandeur of Cathedral State ;

" There doze in Stalls, or o'er a Sermon nod,

" Can we suppose them meek, or thoughtful on

" Thus They :— Ah ! *Thomas, Thomas*, by *St. Ives*, [their God ?

" 'Tis from the *Fryar's* Zeal the Laymen thrive.

" Hence, by our *Convent's* Pray'r, you're blest with

" Hence, by our Masses you'll regain your Health." [Wealth,

The *Churl* in Bed reply'd, ' I have been told,

' The whole Pursuit of Priesthood is for Gold.

' Thus some have said ; this I myself aver,

' I'm not a Jot the better for their Pray'r :

' To *Monk*, to *Fryar*, and to *Priest* I've giv'n ;

' All were Divine Ambassadors from Heav'n.

' But late, alas ! I found this Truth confess,

' The Man that gives the Least, succeeds the Best.'

" Well, well (reply'd the Priest) appease your Rage,

" War with my Patron never will I wage.

" Some

" Some Fools indeed, will ev'n with Kings con-  
 [tend,  
 " To lash their Vices, or their Morals mend.  
 " I, to reform a Prince, would never arm  
 " My Tongue with Thunder, or with Threats a-  
 [larm;  
 " Harsh Precepts in a Court can never charm.  
 " There not one Vice I'd lash, nor tedious dwell  
 " On Stings of Conscience, or on Pains of Hell;  
 " But gentle Rules in gentle Words convey,  
 " Till ev'ry conscious Fear in Hope dissolv'd away.  
 " In short, I ne'er with Patrons disagree;  
 " If they're resolv'd for Hell, what's that to me?  
 " But that your Soul to Heav'n may be consign'd,  
 " Confess to me your Crimes, and calm your Mind."  
 ' Faith (cry'd the churlish Host), by good St. John,  
 ' I've once before To-day been shriv'd by one;  
 ' And once a Day's enough, — " Enough indeed;  
 (The sneering Priest reply'd, more sure to speed;)  
 " Yet to our *Convent* something you may spare,  
 " And bounteously reward a *Fryar's* Pray'r:

138 *The FARMER and the FRYAR: Or,*

“ For should you fail, ah ! what I dread to tell,

“ *Saints* we must pawn, and *Fathers* we must sell.

“ The *Layman's* lost, if lost that learned Store ;

“ Then *Sermons, Comments, Lectures* are no more :

“ In vain you'll wish, you had a *Fry'r* to preach ;

“ For who, dear Sir, can like a *Fryar* teach ?”

He ends : But ah ! th' Harangue no Convert  
[gains ;

*Thomas* the same gruff churlish Wight remains :

So daring impious, that he thought the *Fryar*

A canting Hypocrite, a fawning Liar.

Then thus. ‘ D'ye think, Sir, that I sure shall  
[speed ?

“ *Host*, I as much believe it as my *Creed* ;

“ Nay, I am positive, the *Fryar* cry'd.”

*Thomas* seem'd pleas'd, and with a Smile reply'd,

‘ Persuasive are thy Words ; while yet I live,

‘ In thy own Hand, *Sir Fry'r*, a Boon I'll give ;

‘ On this Condition, and on this alone,

‘ That the whole *Convent* equal shares the Boon.

‘ This thou shalt swear.’ Eager he plights his  
[Troth,  
His Mass-Book kiss'd more firm to bind the Oath.

Then

Then *Thomas* : ' Here, thrust down thy Hand be-  
[hind ;  
' Worthy your *Convent*, there a Gift you'll find.'

Adown he thrust his Hand into the Clift,  
And gropes around to find the wish'd-for Gift.  
Delusive Hope ! something too closely pent,  
Hoarse-rumbling from within demands a Vent :

It burst ; then dissipated here and there,  
And fill'd th' expecting Hand with empty Air.  
Amaz'd, the *Fryar* started with Surprise,  
Red glow'd his Cheeks, and ardent flash'd his Eyes:

" Is thus, he cry'd, thy Penitence confess'd ?

" Is this, false Churl, thy Duty to a Priest ?"

Nor there he'd ended ; but, to stop the Fray,  
Men, Maids, and Wife ran in, and chas'd the *Fryar*  
(away.

The *Priest* enrag'd, now meditating Ire,  
With hasty Pace trudg'd to the neighb'ring Squire,  
A *Quorum Justice* of a sober Life,  
The Parish-Umpire, to compose their Strife.

' Ah ! *Benedicite*, the Justice cry'd,  
' What Evil could to *Fryar John* betide ?'

140 *The FARMER and the FRYAR: Or,*  
*John* raving, stamp'd, before he Silence broke;  
At last, with raving Passion thus he spoke:  
"Divines agree, and Sages have confess'd,  
"The *Church* herself is wounded in her Priest."  
Again he roar'd. 'Pray, Sir, your Patience hold,  
'The *Justice* cry'd, till all your Tale is told.'  
The *Fry'r* the Fact relates, as told before,  
And as the Story heighten'd, rag'd the more;  
And ever and anon abruptly mix'd  
Revenge, Pray'rs, Priests, and Holy Church betwixt.  
"Sancta Maria! cry'd the Squire's fair Dame;  
"Is this, Sir *Fryar*, all the Crime you blame?  
"In my Opinion, as I hope to speed,  
"A Churl has only done a churlish Deed."

Not so, the Squire, with sager Wisdom fraught,  
But gravely paus'd, and seem'd quite lost in Thought;  
In Mind revolv'd the *Statutes* o'er and o'er,  
If ever such a Case occur'd before:  
Then thus reply'd: 'Good *Fry'r*, that Sound and Air  
'Should be divided in an equal Share

'Among



- ' Among *Thirteen*,--No-- not the utmost Skill
- ' In *Euclid's* Problems could perform this Will :
- ' The Fact, as to a *Priest*, I own uncivil,
- ' The Inspiration of some freakish Devil.
- ' Ne'er let the madding Churl perplex thy Soul ;
- ' Sit down, and drown thy Sorrow in a Bowl.

*Jenkin*, the *Clerk*, who heard the whole Disaster,  
And thought he had more Wisdom than his Master,  
Pertly address'd the *Squire* --- ' Sir, I believe,

- ' Would you, and your *good Confessor* give Leave,
- ' I'd shew a Way by which the *pious Tribe*
- ' This *comic Gift* should equally divide :
- ' And tho' I ne'er *Euclid's* deep Problems knew,
- ' You'l all allow, 'tis as an *Axiom* true.
- ' Here, in the Parlour, from the Air close pent,
- ' I'd have a Cart-Wheel with *twelve Spokes* be sent,
- ' Which is, save one, the Number of the Tribe,
- ' 'Mongst whom I equally this Gift divide :
- ' Then to each Spoke each lays his rev'rend Beard,
- ' Like some wise *Seers* of Yore, of whom I've heard;

142 *The FARMER and the FRYAR, &c.*

- Your *noble Confessor*, whom Heaven save,
- Shall hold his Nose upright into the Nave;
- The Churl be brought; and could it hap'ly speed,
- That he could there repeat his churlish Deed:
- 'Tis *Demonstration*, that each Spoke around
- Would equally convey the *Air* and *Sound*.
- Indeed, the *Fryar* here would first be serv'd;
- But sure, this holy Man has best deserv'd.

The *Fryar*'s Frown betray'd his troubled Mind;  
But *Squire* and *Lady* thus in Judgment join'd,  
With a new Coat that *Jenkin* should be clad,  
And that the *Churl* was neither *Fool* nor *Mad*.

END of the SUMNER'S TALE.



# PROLOGUE

TO THE

CLERK of *Oxford's* TALE.

By *Mr.* OGLE.

**M**EANTIME our Host, the studious Youth  
[sarvey'd :

“ You ride as coy and still as any Maid,

“ That fits, new married, at the Bridal Board :

“ What! one whole Day, and not one single  
Word?

“ With some hard Sophistry, I doubt, You strain,

“ And a new World of Logic fills your Brain.

“ But *Solomon*, in Prose if not, in Rhime,

“ Declares, that All things have their Place and  
Time.

“ Sir *Clerk* of *Oxford*, brighten up your Face ;

“ To study here, is out of Time and Place.

“ Who joins in Sport, (no Matter what his Coat,

“ Or Character of Note, or not of Note,)



- " I bow beneath the Rod ; Allegiance pay ;  
" And, far as Innocence permits, obey.  
" I but demand free Liberty of Voice ;  
" Light is the Tribute, that is given by Choice.  
" A Tale I bring, but not from Streets or Stews,  
" At *Padua* learnt, and of no Vulgar Muse.  
" 'Tis what *Petrarch* in Friendly Converse taught,  
" *Petrarch* ! Who purely wrote, and nobly thought ;  
" Whose Works and Manners, delicate as sage,  
" Charm'd ev'ry Sex and State, from Youth to Age.  
" This, shall his Works, to future Times, attest !  
" His Manners are no more---with Him They rest !  
" Illustrious Bard, with laurel'd Honours crown'd !  
" And, were it Just thy boundless Praise to bound,  
" Thou, Sun of *Italy* ! Whose piercing Light  
" Dispell'd the Shade ! Forebade it to be Night !  
" Oh ! that on Me thy Rays had longer shone !  
" Too soon Departed ! And too lately Known !  
" Now deep intomb'd the glorious Poet lies ;  
" To Death a Prey ! A Lesson to the Wise !

" Far



- " Far as a Friend might yet correct a Friend—  
 " (Justly to Blame, is Justly to Commend!)  
 " High tho' I prize the Work, and lov'd the Man;  
 " His Proem seems too copious for his Plan.  
 " Ill wou'd the lengthen'd Prologue suit your Taste;  
 " You'd think it disproportion'd, and misplac'd.  
 " And much I err, indur'd You the Delay;  
 " Tir'd with the Prelude, You'd demand the Play,  
 " *Piemont* He sketches, with a Master Hand!  
 " *Saluzzo* paints; and *Eden* is the Land!  
 " Extends the *Appenines*; with These You rise!  
 " Then *Vesulus* erects; You touch the Skies!  
 " Here from a narrow Spring, the Streams of *Po*  
 " Take Birth, and gather Vigor as They flow!  
 " You hear Them downward drive, an Eastern  
 " Grown to a Torrent from a scanty Source! <sup>[Course,</sup>  
 " Fast to *Emell* their Progress You pursue;  
 " A while You keep *Ferrarian* Towr's in View;  
 " Thence, chace thro' flow'ry Meads the Watry  
 " Till *Venice* sees their Passage to the Main. <sup>[Train:</sup>

" This

*The CLERK of OXFORD'S TALE.* 147

- " This is the Sum ; and This I dare to say ;  
" None ever err'd so sweetly from his Way.  
" Yet tho' He leads Us thro' enchanted Ground,  
" 'Tis still a needful Journey ; Round and Round.  
" The Goal in View, 'tis worse than Death to stay ;  
" We stray, yes, tho' thro' *Paradise* We stray.  
" Such noble Errors of exalted Wit,  
" I dare not copy, tho' He dare commit.  
" We know our Force, know where our Strength  
" And pass the Preface, to commence the <sup>[may fail,</sup> Tale."

*End of the PROLOGUE.*



GUAL.

GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA:

OR, THE

CLERK of *Oxford's* TALE.*By the same Hand.*

**D**OWN at the Foot of *Vesulus* the Cold,  
 (Thus ancient Bards the moral Tale unfold)

Where first, thro' subterraneous Caverns led,

The Springs of *Po* expand their silver Bed ;

And, *Italy* from *Italy*, divide :

There lies a District, on the Western side.

Where, rich in Flock and Herd, in Fruit and Grain

Abundant, Nature spreads an ample Plain.

Here, travel'd Eyes the varied Scene admire,

The rounded Turret, and the gradual Spire ;

From Towns and Castles that aspiring rise,

Proud of their wealthy Seats, and claim the Skies.

At

At once for Pleasure and for Plenty fam'd,  
The Country all around *Saluzzo* nam'd.

A *Marquis* rul'd this happy Tract of Land;  
Happy in Him: He rul'd with easy Hand,  
Full ready were his Subjects to obey  
The mild Indulgence of his gentle Sway.  
Obedient to his Will, He govern'd all;  
Both Orders, the Great Vulgar and the Small.  
Whether, from Merit due, or lucky Fate;  
For Worth not always can secure the Great.

Well was He Born, his Ancestry to trace,  
No *Lombard* Prince cou'd boast a nobler Race.  
And fair of Face, his Face was fair as young.  
Tho' strong of Body, delicate tho' strong.  
Nor was his Beauty to his Form confin'd,  
His Person was the Image of his Mind.  
Where Courtesy, alike, and Honor meet.  
Active, but Wise! Indulgent, but Discreet!  
In Camp or Council, Equal to preside!  
Direct in Battle, and in Law decide!

130 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

In This I blame *Gualtherus* (Such his Name)

In This, and almost This alone, to Blame.

But Free from Love, from Error who is Free?

(The softer Sex will sure admit the Plea !)

Heirs, to support his Name, He never sought,

But turn'd to lighter Sport his Daily Thought:

He never weigh'd, how early or how late,

He sat on Matters that concern'd the State.

But Thence releas'd, to Hawk or Hunt prepares;

And well nigh quite neglects all better Cares.

For Cares, He deem'd the Joys of Married Life.

Fall what might fall, He wou'd not take a Wife.

This specious Cause new Disaffection draws.

And when cou'd Subjects find no specious Cause?

(Oft falsely feign'd, but Here sincerely meant !)

So, flocking on a Day, to Court They went.

And One, in Form, They chose from out the Rest

The Common Voice! to utter their Request;

Whether, as Wifest, to Themselves prefer'd,

Or Dearest to their Lord, and better Heard.

“ Thrice



" Thrice noble *Marquis* ! (Thus with humble Air,  
And suppliant Voice, He spoke the Publick Care,)

" If thus assur'd We meet that Honor'd Face ;

" 'Tis due to thy Humanity and Grace.

" These Princely Qualities our Fears repell ;

" You prompt to ease our Grievs, as We to tell.

" My lowly Pray'r then take not in Disdain ;

" For Love and Duty force Me to complain.

" But why shou'd I my Pray'r, presumptive, call

" This universal Suit, the Pray'r of All ?

" If from my Lips these Words of Licence break,

" Thy faithful Subjects dictate what I speak.

" Oft have I gain'd before like Audience Here ;

" Nor wer't Thou wont to give an heedless Ear.

" Then let Me still find Favor in thy Sight,

" Still, pardon my Request, if not Requite.

" While to the Gen'ral Good I point the Way ;

" And We, but wait your Judgment, to obey.

" Such is thy Rule, and such is our Content,

" Ought to correct not Envy cou'd invent.

" But

152 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

- " But still forgive, if here with sad Presage  
" We doubt the equal Bliss of future Age;  
" And wish those Virtues rare, continued down  
" To latest Times, that dignify our own.  
" To serve Thee, in thy Heirs, thy People want;  
" Nor think this Royal Gift too much to grant.  
" Then bow thy Neck beneath the Blissfull Yoke;  
" The Ties of Wedlock are not easy broke:  
" But Love to Marriage lends a Silken Rein:  
" 'Tis not a Servile Bond, but Virtuous Chain.  
" Then, oh! reflect, (For here the Danger lies!)  
" Reflect, that Time with hasty Pinions flies,  
" Time, ever on the Wing, Time stays for none;  
" Whether We sleep or wake, or stand or run.  
" Tho' blooming now thy Youth, thy Vigour  
" Age, silent as the Night, creeps on unseen;  
" And threatens ev'ry Sex, and ev'ry State:  
" No Pow'r can shun the certain Doom of Fate.  
" Certain the Doom that He must yield his Breath!  
" Uncertain yet the Day assign'd by Death.

" If

- " If Life's a Blessing of so short a Stay;  
" Judge what yourself must suffer by Delay!  
" Judge what We suffer! For in this We claim  
" An equal Int'rest; To preserve your Name!  
" Preserve your Worth! Here ev'ry Voice con-  
" To leave our Sons as happy as their Sires! <sup>[spires,</sup>  
" If never yet We disobey'd your Will,  
" Accept our Offer! Be our Parent still!  
" Ourselves, to do Thee Farne, will make the  
" A worthy Bride; confirm'd by publick Voice! <sup>[Choice;</sup>  
" Such as deriv'd from some exalted Line,  
" Is fit, and only fit, to match with Thine!  
" For This, in full Assembly, We appear,  
" Then pardon our well-meant, tho' needless Fear.  
" Better declare the Grievance than conceal;  
" If 'tis a forward, 'tis an honest Zeal.  
" We fear your ancient Rights (which Heav'n de-  
" May to some new, some foreign Lord descend. <sup>[send!]</sup>  
" Our free but duteous Care, dread Liege, excuse;  
" What much We value, much We fear to lose.

L

Their

154 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

Their honest Plea, in modest Speech address,  
Touch'd with Paternal Care his Gen'rous Breast.  
By Reason and by Duty, They were mov'd;  
But more than Life his Liberty He lov'd.  
That He cou'd ease their Grief, exalts his Mind;  
The Manner only leaves a Sting behind.  
A doubtful Course propos'd, thro' which to run,  
Of Rough and Smooth; a Course he wish'd to shun!  
At length the Father o'er the Man prevails,  
And Public Int'rests turn the Private Scales.

“ Full dear (He said) is future Welfare bought,  
“ Constrain'd to act the Thing I never thought;  
“ Forego my Peace; my Freedom lay aside;  
“ Peace all my Pleasure! Freedom, all my Pride!  
“ Freedom and Peace! In Marriage rarely found!  
“ Then What is to be Wiv'd, but to be Bound?  
“ For Woman is at Best a pleasing Cheat;  
“ Her Look is Counterfeit, Her Heart Deceit.  
“ All She affects, to catch our Ears or Eyes,  
“ Is meer Delusion, Virtue in Disguise.

“ Nor

- " Nor think I aggravate ; when here I view  
" So Many married, and content so Few.  
" And Most wou'd own, were but the Truth  
" That State is an Incumbrance at the Best. <sup>[confest,</sup>  
" From Infancy the knowing Dame prepares  
" The Child to lay her Baits, and spread her Snares ;  
" Man is their Prize, and till the Prize They find,  
" No Fault appears of Body or of Mind.  
" But say sincerely, You that have been caught,  
" Which of You boasts a Wife without a Fault ?  
" A Thousand I cou'd count You in a Trice,  
" Of Folly, Noise, Impertinence, and Vice ;  
" What You may guess, but what I spare to name,  
" 'Tis my Design to reason, not declaim.  
" Some Failures of each Kind in Men We see ;  
" But in one Failure the whole Sex agree.  
" In This, They drive at Universal Sway ;  
" Unblest till They command, and We obey.  
" Wrong I the Sex ? By Married Men be try'd  
" The Cause." He paus'd for Answer.—None

[reply'd,

" Yet



156 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

“ Yet to your Good my Quiet I resign,

“ And yield my Liberty. Your Good is Mine.

“ Not born to govern for Myself alone,

“ I ever held your Int'rest as my own.

“ Then What You kindly ask, I freely give,

“ And this the last and surest Proof receive.

“ This Friend or Foe ! This Good or Ill of Life!

“ This specious Charge ! This Doubtful Chance!

[A Wife !

“ But for the Choice ; Be that our proper Care ;

“ This Mark of Duty and Affection spare.

“ Nor think It matters Ought, whate'er She be,

“ Of Rich or Poor, of High or Low Degree ;

“ Ought, to the present or succeeding Age,

“ What Parents for their Children can ingage ?

“ The Son or well or ill supports his Race,

“ As Heav'n directs ; The Glory or Disgrace !

“ Nor Vice nor Virtue, rightly understood,

“ Descend like Titles, running with our Blood.

“ Was Honor but intail'd upon our Kind,

“ No well-born Prince cou'd show a slavish Mind.

“ Nought

- " Nought cou'd the Seeds of Infamy reclaim,  
" No Vulgar Progeny cou'd rise to Fame.  
" Yet say what House observes an equal Mean?  
" Where fix'd was Vice or Virtue ever seen?  
" View Sire and Son with various Souls indew'd!  
" The polish'd Sire begets a Son as rude.  
" Yet oft the Circle ends where It begun,  
" And the rude Squire begets a polish'd Son.  
" No Human Care can Destiny controule;  
" Superior is the Pow'r that guides the Whole.  
" From Springs unknown are nat'ral Talents giv'n;  
" Call it the Force of Fate, or Will of Heav'n.  
" Our Lives are subject to Divine Decrees.  
" Man only acts as Providence foresees.  
" Our Part perform'd, let Providence prepare  
" (Here all Precaution fails!) the Future Heir;  
" Your Weal or Woe to frustrate or advance:  
" Sprung from what Line, You take an equal  
[Chance.  
" I too the same resistless Law obey,  
" For ev'ry happy, or unhappy Day,

158 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: *Or,*

“ The Pains or Pleasures of the Married State,

“ Hang on the same Necessity of Fate.

“ Yet far as Human Prudence can secure ;

“ There let your Common Oath my Peace insure.

“ Swear—When in Form my plighted Hands I

“ (Whate’er the Object that shall take my Mind) <sup>[bind,</sup>

“ All due Obedience to the Chosen Maid

“ Be fully shown ; all Homage freely paid :

“ Her Right acknowledg’d, from the Nuptial

“ As just, as had She brought the World in <sup>[Hour</sup>

“ And further ; Be it solemnly agreed ; <sup>[Dow’r.</sup>

“ That None in Thought, or Look, in Word,

“ Or of her Fortune grieve, or Birth complain. <sup>[or Deed :</sup>

“ Oppose Me here, I hold the Treaty vain.

“ This I exact. And Justice This requires.

“ Freedom and Peace I yield to your Desires.

“ Resign my Body ; So the Public Voice

“ Demands : But never will resign my Choice.

“ Whate’er concerns the State is not withstood ;

“ Slave I will be, with Pleasure for her Good.

“ Yet

" Yet, as a Royal Slave my Port maintain,  
" And to my Fancy fit the Fashion of my Chain."

Affent from All, the just Proposal bore,  
And solemnly the tender'd Oath They swore ;  
Praying, e're yet They took their sev'ral Way,  
To fix the Spousal, and assign the Day :  
Still dreading that *Gualtherus* wou'd not wed,  
For when cou'd Subjects find no Cause of Dread?

To leave no Doubt of his determin'd Mind ;  
He fix'd the Spousal, and the Day assign'd,  
Term of his Future War, or Future Rest !  
A Chance incurr'd (He said) at their Request !  
Full low They thank Him on their bended Knees ;  
For Vulgar Minds well-tim'd Concessions please.  
And home again all merrily They tend ;  
Proud, by their Conduct, to have gain'd their End.

Mean time their Lord (as Marriage Form requires)  
Appoints his privy Knights, and trusty Squires,  
As well for Pomp as Order, to provide ;  
To grace the Rite, and dignify the Bride.

160 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,  
Strict Charge, on every Chief attendant, lays,  
And eager ev'ry Chief the Charge obeys.  
Nor Ought was spar'd of Service or Delight,  
To dignify the Bride, or grace the Rite.

The Day appointed for the Nuptials came;  
The Feast prepar'd: The Marquis still the same.  
Not One the chosen Consort cou'd devise.  
Tho' what escapes the Courtier's busy Eyes?  
To blame their Lord the Vulgar much incline;  
So close his Speech, so covert his Design?  
And Where They durst, in Secret, or Alone,  
Impeach his good Intent, because Unknown.  
" Slave to his Ease, (in Murmurs thus They said)  
" Imagin'd Ease! He still forbears to wed;  
" Our Suit and ev'n his Word, forgot the while:  
" Why will He thus Himself and Us beguile?

The Morning pass'd; Approach'd the Noon of  
The Ev'ning came: And still the same Delay. <sup>[Day;</sup>  
No Name went round! No Bride appear'd in  
Yet were the Nuptials fix'd to crown the Night. <sup>[Sight!</sup>



Ill cou'd the Croud (suspended to Despair)  
Indure such Myst'ry, such Delusion bear.  
For still the Palace seem'd the promis'd Word  
To keep, and justify its thoughtless Lord.  
There neat in Splendor, pompous in Array,  
Each spacious Hall and princely Chamber lay.  
Rich Furniture in costly Order plac'd;  
Never was Seat of Marriage nobler grac'd.  
Spread ev'ry Table; ev'ry Office stor'd;  
With Delicates to load the Bridal Board:  
All that the Compass of *Italian* Ground  
Cou'd yield, or might in Foreign Lands be found.  
But why prepar'd? No Mortal cou'd decide!  
For what was Bridal Pomp without a Bride?

At Length appear'd *Gualtherus*, richly drest;  
And dawning Hope revives each anxious Breast.  
So wand'ring Trav'lers hail the blushing Ray,  
That first forebodes the kind Return of Day.  
And forth He rides. While all the Royal Court  
Attend; All bidden to the Nuptial Sport.

With

162 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

With many a noble Dame of Beauty bright,  
And many a sprightly Peer, and valiant Knight;  
And all the chosen Gentry of the Land,  
Common or Squire, an honorable Band:  
With These, his trusty Guard, and household Train,  
And manfully their foaming Steeds They rein.  
Who, snorting to the Music's mingled Sound,  
Pass to the Vales, the neighb'ring Hills rebound.

Rumor, the while, their close Attention drew;  
And busily, from Side to Side, She flew.  
A noted Dame attracts their Ears and Eyes;  
And mingles many Truths, with many Lies.  
A Dame, long practis'd in Intrigues of Court,  
Early in Youth She try'd the am'rous Sport;  
Nor late in Age cou'd wholly quit the Trade.  
Well cou'd She prompt the half-consenting Maid;  
And to the wishing Youth sage Counsel lend:  
In Her, Each found a most convenient Friend.  
Thrown out of Play, She overlook'd the Game;  
True Friend to Love! *Bauderia* was her Name.

Unask'd,

*The CLERK of OXFORD'S TALE.* 163

Unask'd tho' high of Rank, She join'd the Throng,  
And thus She tattled as She pac'd along.

" Well! Now! the *Marquis* has reveal'd his  
" (All hear, on Right, on Left, Before, Behind.) <sup>[Mind.]</sup>

" Soon as You pass the Wood, and reach the Lawn,

" Where oft in File the marshal'd Troops are

" You, from your Steeds, fair Ladies, must alight, <sup>[drawn]</sup>

" And single pass Review, within his Sight.

" One He will chuse. For tho' He seems to fly,

" He loves the Sex: You read it in his Eye.

" Happy the Fair, to fix his Choice, assign'd!

" And great his Singularity of Mind!

" He lays his Crown and Scepter at her Feet,

" For unexpected Good comes doubly sweet,

" This He devis'd, for He is Good as Great,

" In Honor to the Sex, and to the State;

" Nor sought a Foreign Fair to deck his Throne,

" Proud to display the Lustre of his own.

" This, He declar'd the Cause of his Delay;

" Declar'd in Council, and declar'd To-Day.

" But

164 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

" But 'twas a Secret kept by his Commands ;

" I know it to be Fact, and from good Hands".

From Fair to Fair the pleasing Rumor spread ;  
Hope fills each female Heart, and female Head.  
Daughters of Avarice his Wealth devour ;  
Swell the Ambitious with the Thoughts of Pow'r.  
Rank fires the Proud ; and Equipage the Vain ;  
But Self-Opinion seizes all the Train.

Hence, fast They fall to Scandal and Surmise ;  
As Who might claim, but Who must lose the Prize.  
And strait each Beauty ev'ry Beauty nam'd ;  
And ev'ry Beauty strait each Beauty blam'd.  
The Mart of Female Censure knows no Glut ;  
Bring what You will, They tax it with a *But*.  
While thus, in Scrutiny, All sentence All,  
*Daphne* is Handsome ; *But* She is too Tall !  
And honestly to judge 'twixt Friend and Foe,  
*Silvia* is pretty ; *But* as much too Low !  
*Delia*, Men say, is fashion'd for a Wife ;  
*But* sure it is a Piece of meer still Life !

And

*The* CLERK of OXFORD'S TALE. 165

And *Cloe* affable, She knows no Pride;

*But* is She not too Free, or much Bely'd?

*Aminia* has a Voice, divine to hear;

*But* then a Mouth that gapes from Ear to Ear!

And *Amarillis* has a World of Fire;

*But* then a Tongue that *Socrates* wou'd tire!

*Flavia* has Beauty, *But* her Look is Mean;

Ah think, my Dear, how She wou'd act the Queen!

And *Myra*, Dignity of Voice and Air;

*But* oh the Color of her Teeth and Hair!

*Trivia* is Delicate; *But* then too Lean,

A living Corps! Half Malady, Half Spleen!

And, full of Health *Nerina*, 'tis confest;

*But* 'tis a Beast of Burthen at the Best!

Nature in *Phillis* made not one Mistake;

*But* She is Young, who knows what She may make?

And *Phæbus* in *Serpilla's* Eyes may shine;

*But* You will grant 'tis *Phæbus* in Decline!

The only Charm of *Sapbo* is her Mind;

*But* to get Lovers She must list the Blind!



166 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,  
And *Glaura's* only Merit is her Shape;  
*But* if You are not Deaf You must escape!  
*Cælia* --- (scarce Envy here a Fault cou'd spy,) *Yes*, 'tis not seen, *But Cælia* is awry!  
Not one was Worthy (For the Truth to own  
Each priz'd Herself) or of his Bed or Throne.  
And well I ween, were They to chuse the Wife,  
Full long the Prince might lead a Single Life.

Mean time in Royal Pomp, and proud Array,  
Along the Dale *Gualtberus* shap'd his Way;  
To where a low but cleanly Village stood,  
Wash'd by a Stream, and border'd by a Wood!  
Of homely Cots compos'd; For such as fed  
The fleecy Kind, or lowing Oxen bred;  
For such as mow'd the Meads, or plow'd the Fields;  
And liv'd on What industrious Labor yields.

Here, lov'd by All, an honest Rustic dwell'd,  
Of all the poorer Swains the poorest held,  
Blest with a Soul superior to his Fate,  
For all his Wish was suited to his State.

Here

Here in this narrow Circle cou'd He find,  
What not the World can give, Content of Mind.  
But yet what All may on Themselves bestow.  
And here It left the High to bless the Low:  
The Princely Palace for the Oxen Stall.  
Him, good *Janicola* the Neighbors call.

A Daughter crown'd his Age, of spotless Fame,  
Tho' noted Form; *Grifelda* was her Name.

A Fairer, not the journeying Sun surveys,  
Or with his rising, or his falling Rays.

A Chaster, never happy Mother bore,  
In Days of Present, or in Days of Yore.

Strict in her Duty, faithful to her Trust,  
She shun'd Temptation, specious Lure to Lust.

Yet, far as Virtue may, She sought to please;  
And honest Toil prefer'd to dang'rous Ease.

Of Diet temp'rate, cautious of Excess,  
Drank oftner of the Spring, than of the Press.

For Wine adds Fuel to the tender Breast,  
The Springs of Youth not Motion want, but Rest.

Wifely

168 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

Wifely she shun'd all adventitious Heat.

Simple her Dress, but yet tho' simple, neat:

Tho' blest of Face, and of a tender Age,

She wou'd not be engag'd, nor wou'd engage.

Free from the Dart of Love She kept her Heart,

Nor yet at Others strove to throw the Dart.

Such Swains as sought her Father's Voice to gain,

In Birth not Soul her Equals, met Disdain.

Base Commerce with Superiors She declin'd, A

For conscious Worth sat scepter'd in her Mind.

Her aged Father was her tend'rest Care

His failing Nature studious to repair;

And oft his Life her Diligence repriev'd,

Repaying back the Breath She had receiv'd.

And next to That her Duty was to keep,

Nor great the Charge, his scanty Flock of Sheep.

And forth She led Them, soon as Day begun;

And home She drove Them, with the setting Sun.

Then was She wont with filial Joy to bring,

Whate'er produc'd, the Summer, or the Spring,

Of

Of Herbs, or Fruits : What Autumn might afford,  
Or Winter spare to spread the frugal Board.

In household Thrift She spent each vacant Hour,  
Arm'd against Pleasure, for She fear'd the Pow'r.  
Hence no false Bait cou'd her chaste Heart intice :  
For Sloth She counted the first Step to Vice.

Her, as He used to cross the neighb'ring Green,  
*Gualtherus* joy'd to see, and oft had seen.  
Her matchless Beauty took his wand'ring Sight,  
And hap'ly minister'd unknown Delight.

'Twas the first Dawn of Passion in his Breast;  
And neither settled Care, nor total Rest.

More frequent came He here, the various Game  
To rouse ; nor knew Himself, why here He came.

'Twas thought, the near Adjacency of the Place,  
The Country round commodious for the Chace,  
Still to this Spot his Course inclines and draws ;  
Or any Thing beside the real Cause.

Yet hither when He led the Sportive Train,  
A secret Pleasure thrill'd in ev'ry Vein ;

M

But

170 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,  
But if averſe, He turn'd the flying Prey,  
Tedious the Courſe, and joyleſs was the Day.  
Next, as She charm'd his Eye, She charm'd his  
[Ear,  
'Twas ſweet Delight her modeſt Voice to hear;  
The native Language of an artleſs Mind,  
Unpractis'd in the Trains of Womankind.  
Oft, by Deſign, He from the Croud wou'd ſtray,  
And oft pretend Occaſions of Delay;  
Loſs of the Sport! Or Failure of his Horſe!  
And tempt Her to more free, but chaſte Diſcourſe.  
Still pleas'd (Whate'er She ſaid, Whate'er declin'd)  
In humble State exalted Worth to find,  
And note each decent Look, and juſt Reply,  
With glad Attention, but with watchful Eye.  
Watchful! leſt ev'n to diſtant View betray'd,  
Envy might wrong the inoffenſive Maid.  
Prudential Cares the beſt Affection prove;  
No Vanity He knew, nor yet knew Love.  
Sincere Regard protects the Fair from Blame;  
Hence what He priz'd, He dreaded to deſame.

Then,



Then, Home as He returns, his Thoughts retrace,  
Her winning Innocence! Her bashful Grace!  
Her pious Care! Her unaffected Mien!  
(Beauties in Courtly Dames too rarely seen.)

Her Form, not spoil'd by Art, by Nature wrought!  
And far above her Sex her Manly Thought!  
No Poverty of Language to express!  
No! Nought of Poverty but in her Dress.

Thus Homeward musing was he wont to ride;  
And thus Himself, Himself unknowing, try'd.

"Blest is the Swain, that to his faithful Breast

"This Virgin joins, cou'd Marriage make him  
[blest.

"Yes, I will own, was I reduc'd to wed,

"Or fear'd not, more than Death, that Bondage  
[Bed,

"None, but *Grifelda*, wou'd I chuse for Wife:

"But ah! what Woman answers Slavish Life!

"Not for the Cause, the Many may misguide,

"That in our ancient Ancestry I pride;

"And rather than their Dignity disgrace,

"Wou'd torture Nature, than demean my Race.

172 *GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,*

" Tho' this be Common Sense. 'Tis without  
[Ground,  
" Sense is by Truth, not by Opinion bound.

" Much fashion'd Vice from false Opinion springs ;

" But lasting Virtue from the Truth of Things.

" Let Vulgar Souls the Worldly Worth define,

" Of hoarded Wealth, or long-continued Line ;

" With Me, to be Well-born, is to be Good ;

" And Merit, the pure Stream of Noble Blood.

" But whither wou'd these wild Conclusions drive ?

" To Where I neither tend nor can arrive ?

" Full happy may the Maid (where-e'er her Fate

" Bestows Her) make, and find that Casual State ;

" A Bliss, so dear the Price, by me unsought :

" An idle Question ! And a wand'ring Thought !"

Thus wou'd He war, to strong Mistrust inclin'd,  
Twixt Sense of Love, and Prejudice of Mind.

But now, to quit his boasted Peace, constrain'd,

Now, that no Hope of Liberty remain'd ;

These Barriers of his Passion once remov'd,

With Rapture He reflects on Her He lov'd.

Then

Then the fair Object, rooted in his Breast,  
Stood forth, in all the Pow'r of Fancy drest.  
So the pent Stream, obstructed in his Course,  
The Damms o'erthrown, pours with re-doubled  
So the tam'd Steed with Fury scours the Plain, <sup>[Force,</sup>  
When from the curbing Hand He snaps the Rein.

Meantime the Maid, full Innocent of Mind,  
Nor knew the smother'd Flame, nor Grace design'd.  
With snow-white Pail She sought the Silver Spring,  
Thence, Nature's pure Munificence to bring;  
Or for her own, or for her Father's Need;  
And Home return'd with more than wonted Speed.  
For now, She heard her Rustic Neighbors say,  
Her Lord wou'd wed, and this the promis'd Day.  
And tho' gay Sport was not her fond Delight,  
Full fain wou'd She have seen this Courtly Sight.

For This, with Haste She bears the limpid <sup>[Freight,</sup>  
Nor dreamt, how near She verg'd on Better Fate;  
How soon to change her Cottage for a Throne:  
And celebrate no Nuptial but Her own,

174 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

She but propos'd to end without Delay  
 The Household Labors of the short'ning Day;  
 Then, at her homely Gate resolv'd to stand,  
 And with her Equals view the Royal Band;  
 While to the Lawn their splendid Course They  
 As Swains returning from *Saluzzo* told. <sup>[hold:]</sup>

Yet Something here She found, nor yet cou'd  
 The Cause, that pain'd her Heart, and griev'd her <sup>[find]</sup>  
 Something, that seem'd to trouble and perplex: <sup>[Mind:]</sup>

Envy, (You'll say) insepar'ate from the Sex:

A virtuous Envy still, and well refin'd!

Corrected Vice, uncommon to the Kind!

'Twas not, that other's Pleasure gave her Pain;

'Twas not, that his Regard had made Her vain;

Nor Malice to the Bride, to Her unknown;

Yet cou'd She wish Her any other Throne.

*Gualtherus* too Her Innocence confess'd,

She cou'd not wish debas'd, to have possess'd.

But had, revers'd, their Distance been as great,

His low as her's, and high as his her State:

His

*The* CLERK of OXFORD'S TALE. 175

His Worth, She inly thought, had fix'd her Choice,  
No Pow'r, or Wealth had brib'd her Partial Voice.

His Steed, *Gualtherus* quitting at the Gate,  
Gave to a Squire, and bade th' Attendance wait.  
Scarce had he enter'd, when *Grifelda* came,  
At Distance known: He call'd Her by her Name.  
She down her Pail, beside the Oxen Stall,  
Hastes to depose, and on her Knees to fall.  
And thus in humble Guise continues still,  
As One that waits to hear the Royal Will.

Tho' fix'd all Sign of Passion to withstand,  
Forward He step'd, and rais'd Her with his Hand.  
While All, that of her Innocence or Truth  
He fram'd, or of her Beauty felt, or Youth,  
Fell short, to what his present Thoughts admire;  
Her Eyes, so full of Modesty, yet Fire!  
The Discomposure of her Face and Frame,  
Blushing, and trembling, with ingenuous Shame!  
" Say---is---*Janicola*?" His Tongue affords  
Uneasy Utt'rance to these easy Words.



176 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

And, cover'd with Confusion as She stands,

“ He---is (She cries,) He waits---his Lord's Com-  
[mands.

Within the homely Cot not long She sought,

And to his Lord her ancient Father brought.

Him by the Hand He takes, and leads aside ;

Then thus : “ In Me, *Janicola*, confide.

“ My faithful Vassal wer't Thou wont to rest ;

“ Nor let the Father with the Prince contest,

“ No longer will I boast the Pow'r or Art,

“ To check my Will, or to disguise my Heart ;

“ Thy Daughter, chaste of Fame as fair of Sight,

“ I claim, but wou'd not claim by Force but Right,”

On Earth the honest Rustic fix'd his Eyes,

Shock'd with Mistrust, astonish'd with Surprise,

At length He rais'd ; unable to controul

The Pow'r of Virtue working in his Soul :

“ My Sovereign Liege, oh ! pardon (He reply'd)

“ To serve You, was my Joy, to please, my Pride ;

“ To please You, and to serve You, as I ought.

“ But sure, my Ignorance mistakes your Thought ?

“ If

- " If my *Grifelda* may some Merit claim,  
" She shou'd not pass thro' Infamy to Fame.  
" Not such my early Care, not such appears  
" Her cautious Youth; She will not wrong my  
" Nor wrong her own. Tho' Daughter of a Swain, [Years.  
" And bred in Want, She lives without a Stain.  
" And may I, of thy Slaves the Meanest Slave,  
" E'er Virtue She forsake, prepare her Grave.  
" Here, in this narrow Compass Fortune grants  
" Sufficient for her Wishes and my Wants.  
" Sufficient yields our Flock, tho' small our Fold,  
" To guard both Her and Me from Heat and Cold.  
" The Stream gives Liquor, and the Forest, Fire.  
" Possess We Little? Little We desire.  
" Ev'n This to your Benevolence We owe;  
" But rather re-assume what You bestow,  
" Than We from simple Honesty depart,  
" And know a Mind corrupt, or vicious Heart.  
" Still may We live, in Innocence and Ease,  
" Pleas'd with our Charge, nor basely seek to please.  
" And,

178 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

‘ And, if so far a Father may presume,

“ Bear Her to Court, You bear Her to Her Tomb.

. The Pleasure that from virtuous Action flows,

The Man of Virtue only feels and knows.

*Gualtherus* own’d a Joy that rose to Pain,

To find so worthy, yet so poor a Swain.

He smil’d ; and to Himself in secret Sport :

“ Few had return’d this Negative at Court.”

Then to *Janicola*. “ My fair Design

“ Mistake not, Friend. By Right I claim Her

“ With Me, (consent but Thou) to lead her Life, <sup>[mine ;</sup>

“ Not, as You wrong my Sense, but as my Wife.”

Mute with Amaze, and with Confusion red,

“ Thy Will be mine,” was all the Father said.

*Gualtherus* strait, pursuing his Intent,

Within the lowly Cot full humbly went;

The bashful Maid He bade approach Him nigh ;

(All this He will’d beneath the Father’s Eye)

Surpris’d She stood with Wonder and Delight,

For never had She seen so fair a Sight,

And

And unaccustom'd to so great a Guest,  
Pale grew her Cheek, and much disturb'd her Breast.

He mark'd the sweet Disorder of the Maid,  
And thus completes the Plan, maturely laid.

" *Grifelda*, know, my Purpose is to Wed,

" And make Thee Partner of my Throne and Bed.

" Thy Father yields Consent our Hands to join ;

" What more remains but to folicite thine ?

" Ought need I add ? The Offer shews my Love ;

" And Time, I hope, thy Constancy will prove.

" All that I ask is quietly to live.

" Then freely give, What only You can give.

" The Match, 'tis true, too much of Haste re-

" Your Thoughts I know not, tho' I feel my Fires. <sup>[quires ;</sup>

" To speak my Passion, or thy Truth to try,

" Time fails ; then let me add this further Tie.

" Swear, that with ready Will, and honest Heart,

" Like or dislike, without Regret or Art,

" In Presence, or alone, by Night or Day,

" All that I will, you fail not to obey ;

" All

180 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

" All I intend, to forward That you seek,

" Nor ever once object to what I speak.

" Nor yet, in Part alone, my Wish fulfill;

" Nor tho' You do it, do it with Ill-Will.

" Nor with a forced Compliance half refuse;

" And acting Duty, all the Merit lose.

" To strict Obedience add a willing Grace,

" And let your Soul be painted on your Face.

" No Reasons giv'n, and no Pretences sought,

" To swerve in Deed or Word, in Look or  
[Thought-

Hard Terms, I doubt, may judge the Modern  
[Maid,  
Marriage dear-bought! And Grandeur overpaid!

Not so *Griselda*. And observe her Life,

All that the Maid propos'd, perform'd the Wife.

" How much thy Vassal falls below thy Care,  
(This just Reply She made with modest Air)

" I own; In Indigence Begot and Bred:

" Stain to thy Race, Dishonor to thy Bed!

" This known, was neither Oath nor Vow to bind,

" What honest Heart cou'd stray, what virtuous  
[Mind?  
" Had



*The* CLERK *of* OXFORD'S TALE. 181

" Had Fortune join'd Me to the meanest Swain,  
" That tends your lowing Herd, or bleating Train;  
" Him to obey, had been my Choice in Life,  
" The meanest Swain had found a faithful Wife.  
" Thus honor'd, ill I merited to live,  
" Gave I not That which only I can give ;  
" What ev'ry Slave might claim. But if those Eyes  
" Have found Ought here to prize, Myself I prize :  
" Mindful to Whom I owe my happier Fate ;  
" Nor yet forgetful of my former State.  
" Sense of your Worth, and Gratitude conspire  
" To firm this Bond ; I swear, as You require :  
" Still to remain observant of your Will,  
" Your ev'ry Charge religiously fulfill ;  
" By that sole Rule my future Life to lead :  
" Nor swerve in Thought or Look, in Word or  
" No other Dow'r I ask, (*Gualtherus* cry'd) <sup>[Deed.]</sup>  
" The World shou'd tempt me to no other Bride."  
Then led Her to the Door : And thus aloud  
Accosts the menial and the noble Croud.

" Here,

" Here, on this Seat of Hope, I rest my Life,  
 " This Maid, and None but Her, I take to Wife,  
 " To This, my Better Part, that Homage show,  
 " All that you owe your Prince, or think You owe.  
 The Ladies then he bade reform her Dress,  
 (Retir'd within the Cot's remote Recess)  
 And richly deck, as Princely Rites require,  
 Nor leave one Remnant of her old Attire;  
 Resolv'd, that e'er She reach'd the Royal Gate,  
 Her Bridal Pomp shou'd suit her Wisely State;  
 Her Mind so noble, and Her Form so fair,  
 First fix'd his Choice: And last requir'd his Care.

In flock the Fair, to dress the Rural Maid,  
 On Nuptials pleas'd to lend their useful Aid.  
 Some mov'd by Duty; by Good-nature Some:  
 Some Vmeditating Marriages to come;  
 And ruminating Some, on Pleasures past:  
 Some curious, and Some envious: Most, the Last.  
 But All, on Entrance, loud Surprize express'd,  
 To see the Courtly Bride, so Country Dress'd.

For nobly born, and delicately bred,  
Her rude Apparel rais'd a gen'ral Dread,  
Such Linnen, never felt ! Seen Garments such !  
So rough ! So coarse ! They almost swoon to touch  
Deep-principl'd in vain affected Airs,  
Of Framing Fears, and Counterfeiting Cares;  
Of Feigning Woe, where They rejoice at Heart ;  
And Pain Dissembling, where They feel no Smart ;  
Not One less Horror witness'd than the Rest,  
Not One so low, as not to seem distress'd,  
Each, as the painful Office They pursue,  
Oft gave her injur'd Hand, and oft withdrew.  
Oft turn'd her Head, ev'n in *Grifelda's* Sight,  
Lest other Dames might think Her less polite,  
Unless some Sign of Censure She had shown,  
That any Thing, so dress'd, shou'd mount a Throne.  
Then, sends the speedy Embassage of Eyes,  
To prove her Taste, and witness her Surprise ;  
Then, starting back, her supple Body bends,  
As if Infection the vile Work attends,

For

184 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: *Op.*

For softer Tasks their polish'd Limbs were made ;  
 'This, was meer Drudg'ry ! Meer mechanic Trade !  
 Ill cou'd their whiter Fingers bear the Soil ;  
 Or weaker Arms support the grievous Toil.

" But This the Prince--And he is free to chuse,  
 " And None in common Manners can refuse."

This vast Fatigue, with mighty Pain subdued ;  
 More easy was the Charge that next ensued.

The Sight of rich Apparel glads the Fair,  
 Fond to admire, tho' destin'd not to wear !

For now, more sumpt'ous Cloaths th' Attendants  
 In secret, by their Lord's Direction wrought ; <sup>[brought,</sup>  
 Shap'd to the fairest Maiden of the Court :

(The Measure gayly taken as in Sport)  
*Calia* the Maid ; Alike her Turn and Size.

Such just Observers still are Lovers Eyes !  
 Full-well each fashion'd Dame performs her Part ;  
 Skill'd in the Myst'ries of the Toilet Art.

By Each some happy Master-stroke was shown,  
 The flowing Robe adjusting by her own.

Rich

Rich was the Robe, and glorious to behold,  
Beset with costly Stones incas'd in Gold;  
The plainer Ground of pure Cerulean Dye,  
And oft the Hand was stop'd to feast the Eye.  
Her Hair They comb'd, that rudely lay untress'd,  
But soon reclaim'd, and in new Order dress'd:  
And Store They add of adventitious Charms,  
Rings for the Hands, and Bracelets for the Arms;  
With pearly Rows, with Golden Bands was grac'd  
The rising Bosom, and the falling Waist;  
And last a Crown was plac'd upon her Head,  
That prominent with Gems a mingled Lustre shed.

Patient beneath their Hands, *Griselda* sits,  
And to their various Wills her Limbs submits;  
But secret with'd, lest Pomp had been prepar'd,  
And much of their polite Exactness spar'd;  
The Vain with sudden Change are soon elate,  
The Stupid have no Relish of their Fate;  
The two Extreams She wisely steer'd between,  
Her Rule of Action was the Golden Mean.



She nor with Idiot-laugh her Bliss proclaims,  
Nor with vain Triumph treats the Courtly Dames;  
Not tho' She saw her Fortune inly vex:

She mild forgave the Failure of the Sex.

And yet not senseless of her Good remains;

But rising Pleasure prudently restrains.

The Wise their Bliss in Contemplation find;

Joy is not of the Tongue, but of the Mind!

Yet oft with quicker Throbs her Bosom rose,

And oft her Face with warmer Blushes glows;

And softer Smiles to paint her Lips arise,

And brighter Rays to animate her Eyes.

The Fair themselves, that joint Assistance lend,

Not apt the Charms of Others to commend,

With Looks of silent Praise, alternate thrown,

Well nigh prefer her Beauty to their own.

Who (still improv'd beneath their forming Hands)

At once their Love and their Respect commands.

But loud Applause (produc'd in publick View)

The Vulgar add, still fond of What is New!

Transform'd

Transform'd (They thought) a new *Grifelda* shown:  
Slaves to Appearance, Not transform'd but known!  
Not such Material Change their Lord confess'd,  
Who bore her fairer Image in his Breast;  
Who, not by outward Show, her Form survey'd,  
And more her Merit than her Beauty weigh'd,  
Yet, for He knew that Dress improves the Face,  
(As Eloquence to Sense adds better Grace)  
Her just Adornment gratify'd his Sight,  
Pleas'd to behold Her in the fairest Light,  
He on her Hands, up-rais'd with decent Shame,  
Affix'd the Ring, that binds the Nuptial Claim.  
Then, on a snow-white Steed, the Virgin plac'd,  
With Crimson Reins and Silver Trappings grac'd,  
Loud shout the coming and returning Throng,  
As to the Royal Court they pass along;  
In Revel there the finish'd Day He spends;  
Till down the Western Steeps the Sun descends.

But not on Things Minute to dwell too long—  
(For copious is the Remnant of our Song.)

188 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

The new-made Bride with such true Merit shone;  
She gave (not borrow'd) Lustre from the Throne.  
So form'd her Speech, so fashion'd was her Mien;  
So Just, but Mild! So Aweful, but Serene!  
Not Envy in her Look or Soul cou'd trace,  
Her low Condition or ignoble Race.  
In Nought She seem'd by Rustick Parents fed,  
In Meanness nurtur'd, or in Rudeness bred;  
No Daughter of a Cottage humbly born,  
But sprung a Princely Palace to adorn;  
Nor only to adorn, but to support;  
Not only fill, but dignify a Court.

Her spreading Fame the Crowd with Wonder  
(Who knew her Birth) and scarce believe their Ears;  
Gaze the Nobility with like Surprise,  
And doubt the nearer Evidence of Eyes.  
For tho' her lowly Virtue was the same,  
Exalted thus It show'd a brighter Flame.  
Virtue lies undiscover'd when confin'd,  
Unfelt the Will, unless the Power be join'd.

Her

Her known Example may this Truth declare,  
So Witty, yet so Wise; so Chaste, yet Fair!  
So strictly Merciful, so humbly Great!  
Such winning Grace, and such complying State!  
Her Looks their Love, Her Words their Wonder  
Diffus'd on All, Indulgent as the Sun!

[won,

Not only thro' *Saluzzo* spread her Fame,  
But distant Regions heard her bounteous Name;  
And ever lavish on her Praises dwell;  
Well as One spoke, Another spoke as Well.  
And Thousands came, Alike the Young as Old,  
Women as Men, to hear Her and behold.

Thus Honesty for once and Honor wed,  
And Humble Fortune decks a Princely Bed.  
The dis-believing Lord himself confess'd,  
'Twas possible in Marriage to be blest.  
At Home his Peace preserv'd the prudent Wife,  
Abroad his Wealth supply'd the Wants of Life:  
And more than Life requires, For kept from Waste,  
Enough remains for Elegance of Taste.

190 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

And for that Worth, thro' Poverty's Disguise,  
Discern'd their Lord, The People held him Wise.  
This as no common Incident be told;  
'Tis what the People are not apt to hold.

Yet not in Household Cares (tho' These alone  
Are worthy Praise) her Excellence was shown;  
Absent her Lord, full wisely cou'd She guide  
The Publick State, The Common Good provide:  
In Judgment equal, easy of Access,  
Complaints to hear, or Errors to redress.  
And ready, as successful, to assuage,  
Or private Discontent, or public Rage.  
Of Counsel prudent, steady to her Trust,  
Strong in Persuasion, in Discernment just.  
And when at Strife, (For Strife all States afford)  
She reconciled the People to their Lord.  
So fought his Peace, and so their Welfare fought,  
Urg'd with such Pow'r of Speech, and Strength of  
That rarely was her Judgment found to fail:  
And if He held the Sword, She held the Scale.

Hence



Hence all Degrees, the Senate and the Crowd,  
Her Justice own'd, her Clemency allow'd,  
A Gift of Heav'n their Fortune to attend,  
Not only to preserve the State, but mend.

Blest was the Subject, and the Sov'reign blest!  
All shar'd her Worth, He all her Worth possess'd.  
Nor yet the Sun had fill'd his Annual Round,  
E'er a new Pledge of Love the Nuptials crown'd.  
A Daughter crown'd! Whose sweetly-op'ning Face  
Adorn'd the Bed with near-resembling Grace.  
And tho' (The better to reward her Care)  
The anxious Mother wish'd a Manly Heir,  
Pleas'd was *Gualtberus*, nor displeas'd the State,  
To find their Wishes half indulg'd by Fate.  
For, from that Sample of Inferior Kind,  
The Promise of a Nobler—They divin'd.  
The Charge *Grifelda*, Mistress of a Throne,  
Intrusted to no Care, beside her own.  
*Gualtberus* long oppos'd, at length comply'd,  
Dissenting more from Love, but much from Pride.

192 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA. Or,  
 No Matrimonial Jar! For here the Strife  
 Was not to burthen, but to spare the Wife.  
 He press'd their common Dignity and Ease,  
 And yielded but to humor, and to please.  
 Yet She maintain'd, (her Argument was strong)  
 " Whole Nature bias'd to preserve their Young!  
 " Of all the Habitants of Earth and Air,  
 " Shall Human Kind take less than Savage Care?  
 " I own (she said) This seems a Country Strain,  
 " The Language of the Daughter of a Swain;  
 " What to the Crowd may furnish Mirth and Sport,  
 " And give Dis taste and Wonder to the Court.  
 " Yet will I say, (For This You taught my Youth)  
 " *Trust not to Show of Things; but to the Truth.*  
 " Be Truth the Rule; Polite or Impolite,  
 " I weigh not what is thought, but what is right.  
 " The Point let Courtly Dames with Leave contest,  
 " This lovely Child shall never quit my Breast.  
 " 'Tis Vice of Fashion! 'Tis Neglect of Kind!  
 " 'Tis Indolence! 'Tis Cruelty of Mind!

To

To such a Husband added such a Wife;  
What fairer Scene cou'd yield Domestic Life?  
Each seems of Each the Fortune to controul;  
Each worthy Each in Body as in Soul.  
So fair the Road, and so direct to Bliss;  
Their Way a Pair so form'd cou'd hardly miss;  
Unless with open Eyes They go astray;  
And wilfully their fated Joy betray.  
And so It chanc'd. For plain Conviction blind;  
*Gualtherus* makes the Ill. He cou'd not find,  
Tho' never had She shock'd his Ear or Sight;  
No Woman cou'd be always in the Right.  
This was his Pain; To strong Mistrust inclin'd,  
No Proof cou'd turn the Bias of his Mind.  
But where to fix a Fault, He seem'd distress'd;  
Was ever Husband so severely press'd?  
First for her Beauty; That was free from Blame;  
Nature ne'er fashion'd a completer Frame.  
Next for her Mind; That gave him less Pretence;  
Nought but her Wit was equal to her Sense.

Then o'er her Virtue quick his Scruples run;  
 Fair as the Light, and spotless as the Sun!  
 Her Duty last He weighs; No Failure past  
 Appears. Yet restless there He settles last.  
 Her former Conduct was not void of Praise;  
 But never was She put to hard Assays.  
 Perhaps 'twas Indolence! Perhaps 'twas Art  
 Int'rest or Fear! She acted well her Part.  
 Content in trivial Things is easy shown!  
 Obedience by the Proof is only known!  
 To vain Disquiet of their common Lives,  
 Thus Tyrant-Husbands tempt their Subject-Wives.  
 Full-unadvise'd We deem; Some think full-wise.  
 But obvious (duely judge!) the Error lies.  
 Miscarriages numberless to cause Debate  
 On either side, affords the various State;  
 This Want to aggravate, that Sense to vex.  
 The Lesson We apply to either Sex.  
 Some heedless Word or Action may offend,  
 Speak ne'er so kind, and ne'er so just intend.

Then

Whence

*The Clerk of Oxford's Tale.* 195

Whence Noise and Strife, Mistrust, Aversion springs.

Add here the common Casualty of Things.

Each to the Other by Alliance bound,

But then Each borders on the Other's Ground.

On Truce how'er let Marriage-Warfare cease.

Act not Hostilities in Time of Peace.

Till Provocation raises fresh Alarms,

Let Neither rouse the Bolom Foe to Arms.

When safe a-shore thy shatter'd Bark repair,

The Gale of *Hymen* blows not always fair.

Pierce not in wanton Sport her weaker Sides,

Enough has She to bear from Winds and Tides.

If then those Ills, that Neither can prevent,

Wives suffer patient; Husbands, live content!

Alone, by Night, where lay the Royal Dame,

With Village sternly-sad *Gualtberus* came,

Whom in unwonted Terms He thus address'd.

"*Grifelda*, say! Retains thy faithful Breast,

"Some just Remembrance of that Golden-Day,

"When first I throw your rural Weeds away,

" And



196 GU'ALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

" And with more fitting Pomp and Splendor grac'd?

" Or, say! Has Time the grateful Thought craz'd?

" And Dignity, by Use familiar grown,

" Made Thee o'er-look the Cottage in the Throne?

" Yet not so many glorious Months have run,

" Since this thy new-created Pow'r begun,

" Review Thyself, and by Reflection know,

" High as You stand, that once You stood as low.

" 'Tis Thine this Grace with Duty to requite.

" For That, I chose the Silence of the Night,

" Safe from each list'ning Ear, and prying Eye,

" Thy Constancy to prove, thy Truth to try;

" Pay you just Faith, or feign'd Regard pretend!

" Then know my Will, and strict Attention lend.

" E'er since the Day that first prefer'd You here,

" Not by Thyself thy Life was held more dear.

" Part of my Own! But far the better Part!

" You shar'd not more my Fortune than my Heart.

" Not such the Love You from the Subject claim,

" Grievous They think the Load, and great the

[Shame.

LnA "

" Up-rai'd

- " Up-rai'd from humble State thy Worth to see,  
" (Thy Worth unknown) up-rai'd to high Degree!  
" Begot in Slav'ry! In a Cottage born!  
" Their private Laughter! And their secret Scorn!  
" But ever since that hapless Child You bore,  
" Loud are their Complaints, not wholly dumb before.  
" My Rule in Ills, is still to make the Best,  
" (Some Ease may follow, if not total Rest)  
" And press, or yield, ambitious of Repose,  
" Just as the Tide of Faction ebbs or flows.  
" Thy Daughter now---(and since the Child was  
" Not thrice the Moon renew'd her silver Horn) <sup>[born]</sup>  
" Thy Daughter now---their Tumult must ap-  
" Not as I wou'd---But as my People please--- <sup>[please,--]</sup>  
" How loth to act the Deed--bear Witness Heav'n!--  
" Nor will I act--unless your Voice be giv'n.---  
" An equal Share You claim.---But fully know---  
" (And here your wonted Soul, *Griselda*, show)  
" Know, your Concurrence is my stated Will!  
" Yield! and by Deed your plighted Word fulfill!

" Act

198 *GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,*

" Act what You swore upon our Marriage Day!

" Mine then was to command, your Office to obey."

She all unmov'd the hard Condition bears ;

Nor Ought concern'd in Look or Thought appears.

No Change his strict inquiring Eyes cou'd read.

Much less oppos'd She or in Word or Deed.

But said : " My Child, Myself too I resign !

" Dispose at Will, my Lord : Your Will is Mine,

" In You just Property of Either lies ;

" And Either for your Good, or lives, or dies.

" My Soul (as Love and Gratitude require)

" Likes, What you like ; desires, What you desire.

" Beside Yourself Nought else is left to chuse ;

" And Nought beside Yourself She dreads to lose.

" This, (by your Grace since first our Hands were  
[join'd])

" Has been her first fix'd Principle of Mind.

" This ! Neither Change nor Fortune can displace ;

" Nor Length of Time, nor Fear of Death deface."

Pleas'd was *Gualtherus* against Nature's Laws.

Cou'd Pleasure spring from such an odious Cause ?

Pre-

Prepos't'rous Joy! By Virtue not refin'd!  
Unworthy of Himself or Humankind!  
Yet long his Thoughts seem'd with themselves at  
As doubtful to pronounce for Death or Life. <sup>[strife,</sup>

Then, as resolv'd, a pensive Leave he took;  
Disturb'd his Gate, determin'd was his Look.

Thence sped; a Messenger of Death he sought,  
To whom He full reveal'd his secret Thought.

Before prepar'd, at Distance due to stand,  
And strictly execute his Lord's Command.

Much on his Faith and oft had he rely'd;

But in less Sanguinary Service try'd.

Whate'er the Order giv'n, He spar'd no Pain,

For from his Diligence accru'd his Gain.

When Need or Danger call'd, was ever near,

From Love or Duty, from Respect or Fear;

The greater the Attempt, the bolder still;

And there is but one Step from Bold to Ill!

Straight to the Chamber where *Griselda* lay,

Commission'd by his Lord, He took his Way.

And

And sterily turning from the Infant Maid,  
Humanely, as his Nature cou'd, He said:

" Displease the Act, Necessity may plead

" Excuse; not Choice, but Force exacts the Deed.

" And well the wise *Griselda* understands,

" That Royal Mandates claim obedient Hands.

" Much may we grieve the while, and long com-

" But to object, or to resist is vain, [plain,

" 'Tis Loss of Time, 'tis Sorrow thrown away;

" The sooner eas'd, the sooner We obey.

" Such is my Fate; commanded by my Lord

" To seize this Child" — He seiz'd Her at the

[Word.

The tender Infant, innocent of Harm,

Smiles on his griev'd Beard, and hugs his boist'rous

[Arm.

To Few, such Energy of Soul is giv'n,

As show'd *Griselda*; 'Twas the Gift of Heav'n.

At once she summon'd ev'ry Pow'r of Mind,

And stood the Strefs; foreboding, but resign'd.

The Man She knew; Suspicious was his Name!

Suspicious was his Office and his Fame!

Nor



Nor less Suspicious was the Time and Place!

But more Suspicious still his Speech and Face!

What She must feel (The Wretch so arm'd and  
Is easier to be fancy'd, than exprest! <sup>[drest!]</sup>

All, that the Prince in dubious Words let fall,

All, that Reflection cou'd to Mind recall;

Seem'd true : (Her Apprehension, wrong or right)

All that She fear'd, seem'd acted in her Sight.

A bloody Scene of Innocence distress!

An Infant, torn, and murder'd, from her Breast!

An Infant, by her hourly Tendance fed!

Sweet Inmate of her Chamber and her Bed!

Add here, just Cause of Horror and Affright,

The Silence and the Darkneſs of the Night!

The strange Neglect of Him her Soul approv'd,

The Man She honor'd, and the Man She lov'd!

To crown the Whole, this Russian Guard appears;

Who can conceive It without Sighs or Tears?

Black were his Locks, and nigh upright They stood,

Smear'd were his Hands, as exercis'd in Blood,

202 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

But, to do Justice to the virtuous Tale,  
Supply in Mind, where I in Language fail.

Think by the Wife and Mother what was born,  
By Duty there, here by Affection torn;

And be the Strife, if not describ'd, conceiv'd:

'Tis scarce to be imagin'd, or believ'd.

Yet, as recorded Rolls the Fact relate,

She bore the Storm, collected and sedate.

And since her Lord had doom'd the Child to die,

Nor from her Bosom stole one stifled Sigh;

Nor from her Eye escap'd one secret Tear:

Tho' never Mother held a Child more dear.

The Messenger of Death, She mildly pray'd,

To reach the Child; whom on her Lap she laid.

And gently begg'd, "E'er yet her sentence past,

"One Kiss She might bestow, since 'twas the last"

Then with such Firmness, as no Tongue can tell,

"Farewell, my Child, (She said) my Child, farewell!

"Full-long a Flight thy thoughtless Soul must take,

"Constrain'd to suffer, for thy Mother's Sake."

A State so woeful, Who cou'd see or hear,  
Without a social Sigh, or friendly Tear ?  
What Nurse, that turns her Tendance to a Trade ?  
What mean Domestic ? Mercenary Maid ?  
Well might the suffering Mother feel Distress !  
Yet no Concern her Looks or Words express.  
So strongly Love and Gratitude cou'd bind !  
And such her Force, and her Command of Mind !

She to the Guard, whose Aspect Horror bred,  
" Here, take thy little Charge (compos'dly said)  
" Go ! Act thy Office, as thy Lord commands.  
" Yes, Royal Mandates claim obedient Hands.  
" And what is his Desire, is my Content.  
" Yet, with his Leave (nor will He here dissent)  
" Depose her Body in some sacred Place ;  
" Where neither Birds may touch, nor Beasts deface."

To This, no Word the Ruffian deign'd to say,  
But seiz'd the Child, and sternly stalk'd away.

Strait to his Lord the Messenger repair'd,  
And faithfully, what He observ'd, declar'd ;

204 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

And, far as Tenderneſs cou'd touch his Breſt,  
Told all, He thought, She ſuffer'd, or expreſs'd;  
*Gualtherus*, Who eſteem'd him plain, but juſt,  
In the Recital loſes his Diſtruſt.  
Till, freſh Poſſeſſion, Prejudice regain'd;  
“Go, execute (He cries) as I ordain'd.  
“Convey the Child.”—A Trial ſo ſevere  
Sure Mother never felt! As You ſhall hear.  
Ev'n tho' his Heart, inclining to relent,  
Oft ſeem'd to diſapprove it, and repent;  
Firm He maintain'd his ſettled Purpoſe ſtill,  
And, as the Great are wont, wou'd have his Will.

The Part aſſign'd, at Forfeit of his Life,  
The Guard performs. *Gualtherus* ſeeks his Wife.  
Full-ſtaſt imagining, in ſecret Thought,  
Or in her Looks to ſee ſome Strangeneſs wrought,  
Or ſome Confuſion in her Words confeſt;  
But ſmooth He found her Brow, and calm her  
Collected in Herſelf She reſts Sedate;  
Nor ſwell'd with high, nor ſunk with adverſe Fate!

Submiſs

Submiss and Chearful, as She wont to prove!

In Duty Faithful! Diligent in Love!

Unchang'd her Turn of Speech, and Bent of Mind!

Wife, as Agreeable! Discreet, as Kind!

Nor mention'd once her Tongue her Daughter's

A Loss She cou'd not praise, but wou'd not blame!<sup>[Name;</sup>

Hence the fourth Sun had fill'd the Year complete,

And vary'd the due Change of Cold and Heat.

Unchang'd to Her the varying Seasons run;

With Peace concludes the Day, with Joy begun.

The only Cause, that cou'd disturb her Breast,

Was that She found *Gualtherus* ill at Rest.

A Child He wish'd. Nor cou'd *Grifelda* find,

Why that unvalu'd Wish shou'd pain his Mind.

So free to part with what was in his Pow'r;

Yet now, He counted ev'ry Day and Hour.

At Length, Heav'n gratify'd his full Desire;

And doubly bless'd the Mother and the Sire.

A Son was born. All hail the hopeful Boy;

Their common Safety, and their common Joy!



206 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

All, that their Country love, and Faction hate!  
All, that wish well to Sov'reign, or to State.  
Unfruitful deem'd the Wife, the Daughter dead;  
The Want of Issue new Commotion bred.  
The Next-ally'd in diff'rent Parts divide,  
And draw the giddy Croud on ev'ry Side.  
Pride and Ambition no Occasion lose,  
To feast on Heirless Crowns with eager Views.  
While Fuel ev'ry neighb'ring Pow'r supplies,  
And blows the Blaze, in Hopes to reap the Prize.  
When now a Son appear'd, oppos'd to All,  
The Factious, from their high Pretensions, fall.  
This Turn their Pride, if not their Cause, befriends,  
Each ends the Contest, where his Rival ends.  
The Loyal joy'd, to see the Tumult cease,  
A firm Foundation laid for lasting Peace,  
All disagreeing Int'rests reconcil'd;  
And hail'd with kind Prefage the Royal Child.  
Lovely the Child, and Manly to behold!  
Mild, as his Mother! As his Father, Bold!

Scarce

Scarce the third Year began with full Repose,  
When, to disturb the Calm, *Gualtherus* rose.  
Hapless in This, that Happy was his Life;  
Again must He assay the Patient Wife.  
Capricious Husband, to Conviction blind!  
What Proof cou'd fix that doubtful Turn of Mind?  
If long Experience but augments your Care?  
Must Man provoke, and Woman ever bear?  
Survey the State of Wedlock at a View,  
A Case so strange, Who ever heard or knew?  
The Husband lives dissatisfy'd in Thought,  
Because the Wife lives guiltless of a Fault.  
Tempt Her He must; full-vainly, dare I say.  
Men keep no Bounds, where Women will obey.  
Imperious most, to Those that most indure.  
Such, He. But Patience is a sov'reign Cure.

When Night had spread her sable Umbrage round,  
*Grifelda*, hanging o'er her Boy, He found.

" Know (He began) but This thyself must know---

" Thy Marriage has produc'd a World of Woe.

208 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

“ The Subject ill our first Affiance took,

“ With lying Voice, and counterfeited Look.

“ A Daughter born, They lessen'd their Disguise;

“ Their Spleen arose apparent in their Eyes :

“ A Son, their open Malice kept no Bound.

“ And on the Mother their Distaste They found.

“ 'Tis true, not yet the Clamor strikes our Ear ;

“ With Terror yet the bad Report I hear.

“ Tho', ill or well, the Prince observes his Trust,

“ Faction is dang'rous, or unjust or just.

“ What Slav'ry (thus the Disaffected cry)

“ Attends *Saluzzo*, shou'd *Gualtberus* die !

“ Then shall *Janicola's* mean Blood succeed ;

“ His base-rai'd Offspring ! His opprobrious Breed !

“ Then shall They lord it ! Hold the foremost

“ What Hope of other Rule, or other Race ? <sup>[Place !</sup>

“ Then well may Villagers our Rights support !

“ And Slaves receive the Honors of a Court !

“ Tho' distant yet the Voice of Discontent,

“ Thus warn'd, let Prudence the Increase prevent ;

“ E'er

" E'er yet in open Audience They complain :

" That done, the Terms propos'd may then be vain.

" For judge but of the Future by the Past,

" All private Murmur will speak loud at Last.

" What Need of Words? To open all my Soul---

" Better resign a Part, than lose the Whole."

He paus'd, and sighing--- " Yes, It must be

" The Fate your Daughter found, attends your Son--<sup>[Done;</sup>

" By the same Hand, on the same Hour of Night,

" Torne from your Bosom, carried from your Sight--

" Harder the Trial, with the Boy to part,

" Longer in View, and nearer to your Heart---

" He grew to Sense, was knowing, and was known--

" The Loss, a Parent well may feel, and own.

" For This I came, to warn You and persuade,

" To summon ev'ry Virtue to your Aid.

" Left hurried from Yourself, You quit the Rein,

" And ill your Trust and Character maintain."

Thus He; the Wively Patience thus rejoin'd.

" This, have I said; and This, I bear in Mind: T

" Your

210 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

" Your Will is Mine ! Your Pleasure, Mine I make !

" Forfake Me, Life, e'er I this Rule forfake !

" Slain as your Daughter, let your Son be Slain ;

" Confirm his Being, or his Death ordain !

" In Her, in Him, no Claim *Griselda* knows,

" But her long Vigils, and Maternal Throws.

" What, but a short Amusement was her Gain,

" For previous Sickness, and successive Pain ?

" All other Right belongs to You alone ;

" Yours be it, to conduct what is your own.

" Consider my Content, below your Care ;

" In neither Child *Griselda* claims a Share.

" I too am Yours, in all and ev'ry Part,

" For when you gave your Hand, I gave my Heart.

" Not that I plead Affection, yet deny

" Obedience due ; I own the forceful Tie.

" From that then blest to this still happy Day,

" (E'er-since You threw my rural Weeds away)

" Then I acknowleg'd, and acknowlege still,

" That with my Habit I depos'd my Will,

" Freedom



- " Freedom of Action, Liberty of Choice,  
" *Griselda's* Voice must still confirm your Voice,  
" Urge what You urge, forbear what You forbear:  
" I wait your Order, as your Dress I wear.  
" Nay more: Had I your Thoughts by Prescience  
" Such passive Duty had not now been shown. <sup>[known,</sup>  
" With your Felicity I cou'd not part,  
" Tho' ev'ry String It tore that brac'd my Heart.  
" Myself had been as forward to propose,  
" And quell the Tumult, e'er so high it rose.  
" But now that your Resolve is fully told,  
" Determin'd as your own, my Purport hold.  
" And were my Death but wanting to your Ease;  
" Death wou'd I bear, to serve You, or to please.  
" For Death, that weak or wicked Minds may move,  
" Makes no Comparison to Loss of Love."

Her steady Virtue fill'd Him with Surprise;  
Long on the Ground He look'd with musing Eyes:  
Then left her Presence, in Appearance, sad!  
But glad at Heart! Cou'd such a Heart be glad!

And

And strait, the Ill-prefaging Ruffian came, " "  
 The same in Gesture, and in Face the same. " "  
 Rude, as He seiz'd the Sister where She lay, " "  
 He seiz'd the Brother; or in ruder Way. " "  
 Worse than before, if worse He cou'd devise, " "  
 More insolent his Steps, more stern his Eyes. " "  
 A Scene, all human Nature must detest! " "  
 Yet cou'd the feeling Mother steel her Breast. " "  
 She clasp'd the Boy, then, (wonderful to tell!) " "  
 She gently kiss'd, and mildly bade farewell. " "  
 And thus address'd the Minister of Death: " "  
 " This let me crave, when He resigns his Breath, " "  
 " This (if your Lord object not) let me crave! " "  
 " Provide my little Son a decent Grave! " "  
 " His tender Limbs, full delicate to Sight, " "  
 " Protect from Birds by Day, and Beasts by Night! " "  
 She, humbly ask'd; He no Return affords: " "  
 Unless in Looks, more horrible than Words. " "

Her Strength of Soul, *Gualtherus* more and more  
 Admir'd; a pure, but in-exhaustless Store!

Like Gold, extracted from long-hidden Mines,  
That still the more 'tis try'd, the more refines.  
Yet was He not content. To such a Bent  
Of fix'd Mistrust, no Proof cou'd give Content.)  
For now, his Quiet studious to perplex,  
He ruminates the Malice of the Sex!  
The Face of Ease, that hides the secret Smart!  
The Tongue, still-ready to bely the Heart!  
And oft, had there been Room, He seem'd inclin'd,  
To term her Patience, Cruelty of Mind!  
Such dread Effusion of her Infant's Blood,  
Unmov'd, what tender Mother had, withstood?  
And tho' He knew (by strict Observance prov'd)  
That next to Him each tender Child She lov'd;  
And, but that Him She lov'd, lov'd more than Life:  
He doubts the Woman, forc'd to praise the Wife.  
He waited, if in Look, or Word estrang'd,  
Her Fondness lessen'd, or her Temper chang'd.  
But neither Word nor Look admit a Doubt,  
For all seem'd Peace within, and Joy without.

214 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,  
One Harmony of Face and Soul appears ;  
Days following Days, and Years succeeding Years,  
More true as She advanc'd in Age, She grew ;  
(Cou'd genuin Truth be said to grow more true,!)  
As if by Nature, not by Marriage, join'd,  
Two Forms were influenc'd by one Ruling Mind,  
Whate'er he sought, seen or unseen his Aim,  
Same as his Will, her Pleasure was the same.  
She thought, 'twas not her Province to contest,  
Her ready Faith suppos'd it for the Best.  
Whether the lovely Offspring liv'd or dy'd ;  
Much tho' she fear'd, She cou'd not well decide ;  
But still her Soul this Principle maintain'd,  
That if They dy'd, *Gualtherus* was constrain'd.  
She judg'd it his Misfortune, not his Fault,  
For much of his Humanity She thought ;  
And much of her Concern this Thought remov'd,  
She knew, He cou'd not part with what He lov'd.  
This Sacrifice, if boist'rous Faction claim'd,  
She own'd, He must assent, nor cou'd be blam'd.

But

But was it possible to steer between  
The Father and the Prince, and guard the Mean;  
She cou'd not frame the Risque, He had not ran,  
For so She took, nor so mistook the Man.  
Hoping the Best, and to the Worst resign'd;  
Such was her Force, and Confidence of Mind.

Thro' all this mild Complacency of Life,  
Fell She, as Mother, yet She rose as Wife.  
No other Good, besides his] Good, She knew,  
Of Worldly Int'rest, or of Private View.  
No Loss, beside his Loss, cou'd give Her Pain,  
No Gain advantage Her, beside his Gain.  
These were her Rules; these Hard but Golden  
(Not well observ'd in Matrimonial Schools.) [Rules,  
Wives on their Husbands shou'd rely alone;  
And by maturer Judgment mend their own.

Not so the Subject; Where his Conduct fail'd,  
More strict to mark, than where his Worth prevail'd.  
Fond of Complaint, and ready of Surmise,  
Each Princely Virtue, They cou'd turn to Vice.

That



That here much Cause was giv'n, (must be allow'd)  
Much to alarm the Council and the Croud.

Dark the Design. And wide the Rumor spred,  
And equal Horror and Compassion bred.

The Silence of the Court some Guilt confess'd;  
The Children missing, Malice adds the Rest.

Doubtful as He in Conduct, They severe  
In Censure, send the Tale from Ear to Ear.

" *Gualtherus*, by unthinking Love misled,  
First makes his Slave the Part'ner of his Bed.

" And then, the Stain impatient to indure,

" Adds to the vile Offence a viler Cure.

" But what had the long-suff'ring Mother done?

" (O'er Things unknown thus knowingly They

" The Children, What? Then, such unnat'ral

" Giv'n by the Hand, that shou'd preserve their  
[Death,  
Breath!"]

On Facts uncertain, while the Croud debate,

They hate, that lov'd; that lov'd not, doubly hate.

Loud was His Infamy, as once his Fame!

" A Murd'rer! an accurst, detested Name!

" A

" A Villain, not from Passion, but Design !

" Abjur'd by Laws, both Human and Divine !"

Yet might the People murmur, or assent,

*Gualtherus* firm pursued his fixt Intent.

But check a-while, my Muse, thy looser Rein,

To court the Judgment of the Female Train.

Full-fain wou'd I consult, in Time and Place,

Their learn'd Opinion ; Doubtful is the Case.

Declare, Which, of the Two, was most to blame ?

Was He too rigid, or was She too tame ?

Each Husband left sole Arbiter of Life,

What wou'd become of many an honest Wife ?

What wou'd She suffer, sentenc'd to submit,

From all his Pride of Sense, and Spleen of Wit ?

Or grant such Trials, as *Griselda* ran,

May show, that Woman is the Slave of Man ;

Say, might not these for any Wife suffice ?

What cou'd a harden'd Husband more devise ?

To Try her Faith ? Her Constancy to prove ?

Great, You must own, her Patience, and her Love.

But 'tis a Truth the Sex need not be told,  
 That Men are model'd in a various Mold.  
 And Some, as old and new Experience finds,  
 Indued with most perverse unyielding Minds.  
 In These, whatever Sense first strikes their Thought,  
 (Or wrong or right) th' Impression deep is wrought;  
 Dying They keep the first Resolves They make,  
 Bound to Opinion, as a Bear to Stake.  
 If properly the Object strikes his Sight,  
 'Tis great good Luck, the Obstinate goes right.  
 But sure the Chance is more than equal found,  
 That wrong He goes, yet travels round and round.  
 Submit, intreat, diversify, explain,  
 Inlarge, confirm, confute: The Task is vain.  
 To satisfy the Purport of his Will,  
 Th' Event must follow, be it Good or Ill!  
 Twice, from the Nuptial Day, sev'n Years were  
 And twice seven Years the Nuptial Trials hold.  
 Each Proof severe, *Griselda* firmly pass'd,  
 Yet One remain'd behind, the Worst, tho' Last.

A Doubt, He rais'd, and nourish'd in his Breast ;  
Nor, till He found the Truth, cou'd think of Rest.

“ There are (He judg'd) a Race of selfish Mind,  
“ That own no Tie of Nature, 'or of Kind.  
“ Who rigidly their Breasts to Others steel ;  
“ Yet, for Themselves, most sensibly They feel.  
“ Such hear, with equal Ease, the parting Groan  
“ Of Them They never knew, or long have known.  
“ And view the Wreck, without Distress or Care,  
“ Of Those that bore Them, or of Those They  
“ No Partner, They, of joint Affection, own ; <sup>[bear.</sup>  
“ Their Pleasure, and their Pain is Self alone.  
“ And such She is, or what, I'm yet to learn !---  
“ Hence, her Submission ! Hence, her Unconcern !  
“ If try'd in Self, She ends as She began,  
“ She must be more than Woman, more than Man !”

Thus He ; such early Prejudice He nurs'd ;  
That the last Trial but includes the first.  
For This, a Messenger to Rome He sent,  
(Now was the Time to give the Scruple Vent.)

In legal Phrase, the Marriage to annull,  
 And counterfeit in Form the Papal Bull.  
 His hasty Passions to this Course incline,  
 The shortest Way to answer his Design.

“ Take, for your Plan, some old Pontific Frame;  
 “ Fashion’d anew, the Use will be the same.”

At Rome, the Messenger arriv’d, and sped;  
 A forging Hand, He found, and scheming Head.  
 Nor well cou’d fail in that prolific Court,  
 Where Surrogates, Scribes, Proctors, Priests, resort.  
 ’Twas model’d, Like to Like, and Word for Word;  
 He sends a formal Copy to his Lord:  
 Who, as He us’d on Points of high Debate,  
 Conven’d all Orders that compos’d the State.

Summon’d, They meet; The Prince assumes the  
 Then thus, with sterner Brow, and haughtier Tone. <sup>[Throne:</sup>

“ Content, as fortunate, in Single Life,  
 “ You forc’d Me on that dang’rous Rock, a Wife!  
 “ A Wife I chose, (nor now disguise the Truth)  
 “ From Heat of Blood, th’ Intemperance of Youth.

“ One,



" One, whose excelling Form my Passion mov'd,  
" I lov'd; and All seem'd Right, because I lov'd.  
" No other was my Motive, or my Aim,  
" I neither sought your Interest, nor my Fame.  
" My riper Age this Folly wou'd atone,  
" Strength to your State, and Lustre to my Throne,  
" I wou'd acquire, in Kindred Grandeur ty'd;  
" The Fair, to great *Pegasus*, near ally'd.  
" For This, the Papal Chair our Envoy moves,  
" The State will sanction, what the Church ap-  
[proves.  
A long and hoarse Applause th' Assembly roars,  
Like rolling Waves that murmur to the Shores.  
These, Slaves by Nature, born to bear the Rod,  
Swallow'd his Words, as Oracles from God.  
Those, from long Habit, custom'd to the Bit,  
Their Duty thought, to hear and to submit.  
Others, approv'd It not, yet not withstood,  
From frigid Virtue, indolently good.  
But Some, from sordid, or ambitious Views,  
Prais'd the Design, and pray'd, "No Time He'd lose."

And so had acted, was the Case his own,  
And good *Gualtherus* sentenc'd from the Throne.

Yet Some, of nobler Soul, but These were few,  
Place all *Griselda's* Merit full in View;  
Her Worth, of Private and of Public Kind,  
Her blameless Conduct, and unerring Mind.  
And with bold Truth, and gen'rous Ardor plead,  
Th' Injustice, and Dishonor of the Deed.  
Tho' Prince and Subject join'd their gen'ral Voice,  
No Pow'r cou'd authorise the guilty Choice.

Let Pope and Synod their whole Strength unite,  
That which is Wrong, They never cou'd make  
" Repudiate, without Cause, the faultless Dame? <sup>[Right.</sup>

" 'Twas Tyranny! It soil'd a Life of Fame!

" They humbly differ'd, and the harsh Divorce

" They cou'd not counsel! 'Twas an Act of Force!"

Here, rising, " 'Tis my Will, (He said) Withdraw"--

Nor till that Hour had urg'd his Will for Law.

Meantime, the trusty Guard returns from *Rome*;  
And all *Saluzzo* mourns *Griselda's* Doom.

None

None penetrate the Fraud, or doubt a Wile,  
So was It fram'd in true Pontific Stile!  
So fraught with Church Sufficiency and Pride:  
And thus the Apostolic Roll imply'd.

“ That He, the Delegate of God, the Pope,  
“ Their Heav'nly Guide, and their Terrestrial Hope,  
“ In kind Compliance to his Son's Request,  
“ (Weighing the People's Good, and Prince's Rest)  
“ Did, and Hereby, Authority had giv'n,  
“ (In Virtue of his Right deriv'd from Heav'n)  
“ To nullify the Marriage from that Hour,  
“ Save, to the Wife whate'er She brought in Dow'r;  
“ With sundry meanless Items, quaint and old;  
“ So sign'd! So seal'd! So witness'd! So inroll'd!--”  
To this, was added, for the Subject's Ease,  
A Load of Pardons, and at mod'rate Fees.

Handed from Heav'n the Scrole, the Croud believ'd,  
To Slav'ry prone, and form'd to be deceiv'd.  
Moles, that in Darkness center'd their Delight!  
The Day, to Them, had been a Pain of Sight!

" The Pope, infallible, with one Accord,

" They held, nor less infallible their Lord.

" For what their Lord requir'd, the Pope allow'd."

Take but in largest Sense the Term of Crowd!

Nor try'd by Fortune, nor by Birth defin'd,

But Honesty of Heart, and Worth of Mind,

Without these Qualities, let Princes know,

They are themselves the Vulgar, and the Low.

The rude *Saluzzians* swallow'd all the Bait,

(I mean the Number of the Small and Great)

" In Heav'n, They own'd all Marriages were made,

" Yet was the Prince by Heat of Youth betray'd.

" If then contracted Parties disagree,

" Apply to Whom, but Him that keeps the Key?"

" What other Pow'r cou'd finish the Debate,

" And shut and ope the Matrimonial Gate?"

There wanted not, in all her Doubts and Fears,

Some to convince *Griselda's* Eyes and Ears.

Prompt to insinuate what the Prince intends,

(And These, the formost of her Female Friends)

With

With cruel Pity They lament her Fate,

“ So alter'd He, and so estrang'd of Late !”

Others, maliciously, to hurt her Rest,

Who thought in Silence They had read her Breast,

“ Urge the Barbarity, that cou'd destroy,

“ By Turns, the lovely Girl, and hopeful Boy.”

Others, to like Humanity inclin'd,

“ Hint at the Bride, and the Divorce design'd ;

“ And were They bound to lead so curst a Life,

“ Wou'd rather be the Relict, than the Wife !”

To This, She own'd, “ Appearances were strong,

“ But yet, She cou'd not think He cou'd do Wrong.”

What Force of Virtue cou'd the Shock sustain ?

Love, so severely try'd, yet try'd in vain !

And, tho' her Looks no Change unusual shew,

Full deep her Heart, I deem, was charg'd with Woe.

But, humble tho' her Birth, her Soul was great ;

Form'd to indure the worst Extreme of Fate :

Fix'd, from his Pleasure, never to depart,

To Whom, She gave her Innocence, and Heart.



226 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

Free was her Breast from Sighs, her Face from Tears,  
 Tho' well confirm'd th' unwelcome News She hears;  
 Knows, on what Message, and with what Intent,  
 The frequent Envoys to *Bulogna* went.  
 Where rich *Pegasus* rul'd with peaceful Sword,  
 Whose Wife was Sister to her faithless Lord.  
 This Princess, with humaner Talents blest,  
 A Mind, resplendent as her State, possess'd,  
 To learn her Manners, foreign Dames resort;  
 The Virtues, not the Vices, of a Court.  
 Among the Rest, a Maid excelling fair,  
 Was still distinguish'd with peculiar Care,  
 Bred from an Infant, tho' of Birth unknown,  
 The Royal Pair respect Her as their own.  
 And Her, 'twas rumor'd, on his Change of Life,  
 The Marquis of *Saluzzo* chose for Wife;  
 To dignify his State, adorn his Bed:  
 And wide the Fame malicious Echo spread.  
 " That now *Griselda* must resign her Claim,  
 " For from *Bulogna* a new Consort came;

" Bright

"Bright as the Sun, and youthful as the Day,

"With splendid Equipage, and rich Array,

"The great *Pegasus*, to augment her State,

"With all his noble Lords in Order wait,

"The Kindred Maid respectfully to guide,

"And Her young Brother, riding by her Side:

"Who to *Saluzzo* shap'd direct their Way,

"The distant Journey lessening, Day by Day."

Say, was not This sufficient to molest?

The hard *Gualtherus* might have spar'd the Rest:

Thro' Silence some Humanity had shone,

Pity might lessen Wrong, tho' not atone.

But He, when full the Court, to tempt Her more,

Thus spoke, in boist'rous Terms, unus'd before:

"Not much displeas'd, tho' chose from humble

"I saw You fill the Station of a Wife. [Life,

"Not for your Beauty, Birth, or Wealth, or Youth.

"But for your Duty, Faith, and Love, and Truth.

"Yet, now I find, by sad Experience wise,

"That in great Lordship, greater Slav'ry lies.

"To

228 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: Or,

“ To This conspir’d my Fortune and my Fate ;

“ Tho’ Prince, yet lowest Vassal in the State.

“ Debarr’d, where ev’ry Swain may use his Voice,

“ Freedom of Will, and Liberty of Choice.

“ A Wife to wed, the Public Care ordains,

“ And now, to quit that wedded Wife constrains ;

“ A new, is sought : Nor is the rising Flood

“ Of factious Discontent, to be withstood.

“ For This, full Pow’r to loose my former Vows,

“ TH’ indulgent Father of the Church allows.

“ And a new Bride is chose, and on the Way,

“ To obviate all Suspense, and all Delay.

“ Be strong of Heart, and void anon the Place.

“ Yet This I grant You. Take it as a Grace.

“ All that You brought Me, on the Nuptial Hour,

“ I grant You. Take it All ! That Princely Dow’r !

“ But well won’d You observe, What I advise ;

“ Know, They, can never fall, that never rise.

“ Then chuse an Equal, on the peaceful Plains,

“ And live the little Princess of the Swains !

“ Lost

" Lost to a Palace, in a Cottage rest.

" None may presume, for ever to be Blest.

" Yet, this Celestial Gift to All is sent,

" To bear the Stroke of Fortune with Content."

" I am not now to learn (She strait replies)

" The wond'rous Distance that between Us lies.

" Me, not your partial Choice, cou'd worthy make,

" To share your Grandeur, or your Bed partake.

" Yet if this House, (as Heav'n may Witness bear)

" I enter'd Wife, I liv'd not Mistress there.

" As best became, I study'd to behave,

" As One, above your Slaves, your humblest Slave.

" That there so long, I held the foremost Place,

" I think it not my Merit, but your Grace.

" And if a fitter Consort You require,

" Content, to my Paternal Cot retire ;

" Humbly to dwell, where humbly I was bred :

" Nor share your Grandeur, nor partake your Bed.

" There, clean of Heart, the Widow, as the Bride,

" Will live, if not to You, to None ally'd.

" Nor

" Nor shall it be my Blot, while Life remain,

" To soil your Choice by any vulgar Stain.

" That once You deign'd to join Me to your Side;

" This Thought let Me indulge of Royal Pride.

" This single Thought! May Heav'n propitious

" In Her You chuse, the Wealth and Birth I want.  
[grant,

" Pleas'd, for your Good, the Station to resign,

" That was my Bliss, that once, my Lord, was  
[Thine.

" Thence, priz'd by Me, Disturb'd if I depart,

" 'Tis not, to lose your Fortune, but your Heart.

" Such Dow'r You proffer Me as first I brought;

" Those rustic Weeds! Yet where may Those be  
[sought?

" Well I remember, on the Nuptial Hour,

" With Scorn, You threw aside that wretched Dow'r.

" Far other then, your Gesture, and your Mind!

" In Look, how gentle! And in Speech, how kind!

" But I have heard, and prov'd the Saying true;

" Love is not, when 'tis old, what 'twas when new.

" Yet, shall no Fear of Death constrain my Will,

" (Death the last Line of Human Good and Ill!)

" Low



- " Low as I fall, at Fortune to repine,  
" Proud of the Thought, that once your Heart was  
" Then, when You rais'd your Vassal to your Breast,  
" And rudely clad before, full richly dress'd ;  
" Obedient Duty, and unspotted Fame,  
" Was all I brought. No other Dow'r I claim.  
" But why recall to Mind that blissful Day?  
" You wish It had not been, and I obey.  
" Then down I lay this Scepter from my Hand,  
" (Here, never borne, as Symbol of Command !)  
" Cast, from my Head, this decorated Crown,  
" And from my Body, loose this ermin'd Gown.  
" And last this Ring, (This last let me restore !)  
" What, with unwearied Constancy I wore.  
" Lodg'd, in the Stores, the Rest your Orders wait ;  
" Your Gifts of Love ! Or Ornaments of State !  
" Naked I came, and naked I return,  
" Nor must I, since It suits your Grandeur, mourn.  
" This only let me beg, nor beg in vain,  
" For What I brought, and never can regain !

" For

" For all my Duty, Faith, and Love, and Truth!

" Untainted Chastity! Unpractis'd Youth!

" Years, that I pass'd! And Children that I bore!

" (The last unguarded Words She hurried o'er.)

" Grant me such Cloaths as fit *Griselda* best,

" A Common Garment, and a Rustic Vest.

" An Outcast let me be. Yet This I pray,

" Let me not, like a Worm, go by the Way;

" The People's Laughter, and their Lord's Disgrace.

" For this may cast below my Servile Race!

" Below her State, that once was call'd your Wife!

" None, with Immodesty, can tax my Life."

With Dignity unalter'd This She said,

Her Cheeks alone effus'd a warmer Red.

Compos'd, tho' pain'd! Determin'd, tho' distress'd!

The Prince was mov'd, as every Eye confess'd.

" Your Vest Retain" (impassion'd He reply'd)

" But quit all other Marks of stately Pride."

He cou'd no more,---His Voice its Utterance lost,

And this last Proof He tempted to his Cost.

Silent

Silent He stood, with agitated Breast ;  
But his Look witness'd many a Sigh suppress'd.  
Yet Tears wou'd flow; a voluntary Tide,  
And These He strove, and strove in vain to hide.  
His Heart, against his stubborn Will, conspir'd ;  
Aside, He turn'd ; and hastily, retir'd.

Her Condescension struck so strong a Light ;  
It fill'd the Court with Horror and Affright,  
" May I be never to such Ill betray'd !"  
In Silence sigh'd the unexperienc'd Maid.  
Each Widow, to her Secret Friend, alone,  
Whisper'd, " Thus treated, He had had his own."  
And ev'ry Wife attested Earth and Heav'n,  
" 'Twas a mean Act, a bad Example giv'n !  
And ancient Maid, with ancient Maid began ;  
" How great our'Scape, Who never yet knew Man !"

Meantime *Grifelda* secretly withdrew,  
And disarray'd Her, safe from public View.  
Conforming, far as Decency allow'd,  
She shun'd the Noble and Ignoble Croud.

All, that She cou'd, She left of her Attire,  
 And no Intrusion furth'ring her Desire;  
 The Postern Gate She pass'd, the publick Street  
 With naked Head She gain'd, and naked Feet.

But soon the Croud her noted Form descry'd,  
 And pour'd before, behind, on ev'ry Side.  
 Down hast Thou laid, in vain hast Thou laid  
 Thy Robe, thy Ring, thy Scepter, and thy Crown!<sup>[down,</sup>  
 Stript of thy State, thy native State They find;  
 Grandeur of Mein! And Majesty of Mind!  
 Exil'd in Thee, thy Exile They attend;  
 The Friendless, that, in Thee, still found a Friend!  
 The Motherless, that met a Mother's Care!  
 For 'twas thy Good, thy Good with all to share!  
 Hence, bare-foot as She trod the flinty Road,  
 Their Vestments o'er the rugged Way They strow'd.  
 And not one Breast refus'd a pitying Sigh;  
 Void of a Tear was not one melting Eye;  
 Grief in each Voice, and Face, express'd, and shown!  
 In ev'ry Voice and Face, except her own!

Tho'

Tho' loud They spread her Praise, and urg'd her Wrong,  
She curb'd Resentment, and restrain'd her Tongue !  
Silent She mov'd; majestically slow,  
As One, in Pain that pleasur'd, joy'd in Woe !

But wicked Fame precedes with nimbler Tread,  
The Father reaching in his homely Sted.

And tho' the long Neglect, Year after Year,  
Had caus'd Him many a Sigh, and many a Tear.

Never to touch the Court on Pain enjoin'd ;  
Whence, proud, He thought, his Prince, or Child,  
Yet musing with himself, full oft He said ;  
[unkind !

“ By Force of Love, *Gualtherus* was misled,  
“ That Fire once cool'd, his Lust will yield to Pride,  
“ And the Wife fall a Victim to the Bride.”

Tho' Length of Time had fortify'd his Breast,  
The sudden Rumor rous'd Him from his Rest.  
His Cloaths, from off his aged Breast, He tears,  
From off his aged Head his hoary Hairs.  
Devotes the Light, and deprecates the Day,  
And Life, impairing with too slow Decay.



236 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: *Or,*

Then seeks, with anxious Care, his Rustic Hoard,  
Where his fond Heart her Virgin Habit stor'd ;  
Sav'd, to indulge his Mind and to imploy,  
In pleasing Pain, and melancholy Joy.  
Now, found of Use ! He speeds with feeble Haste,  
Cover'd his Child, lamented, and imbrac'd.

Here, for a Space, remain'd the Patient Wife,  
And, thrown from great, returns to vulgar Life.  
Yet never once was heard her Lord to blame,  
Tho' spirited by many a busy Dame.  
Above the Pow'r of Fortune, or of Fate,  
She rose, in Good, or Ill, alike sedate !  
In Good, against Distress, She arm'd her still,  
And still prepar'd Her, for Success, in Ill.  
This was her Character, by All allow'd,  
“ Virtuous, tho' Beautiful ! Tho' Great, not Proud !  
“ Discreet, as Witty ! Sprightly, as Serene !  
“ Sage, but not Sad ! And Humble, but not Mean ! ”  
On *Job*, Priests flourish still, with wond'rous Ease,  
And Priests on *Job* may flourish, if They please.

We

We mean not, here, to enter the Dispute.  
Yet Priests can prove, a Woman is a Brute ;  
And, (when it serves their Turn) a Man, a God :  
But 'tis the safest Way to kiss the Rod.

Yet when the *Man of Uz*, whose perfect Life  
They gloss, and blazon the intemp'rate Wife,  
Who bade Him to his Face, curse God and die ;  
Mean They the Sex ? Sure, Priests may err or lye !  
Yet, not to stab the Church, but gently probe,  
I say, *Griselda* far transcended *Job* !

And fast as Men, cou'd Women Texts expound,  
As many Female Suff'ers wou'd be found !  
Women than Men, more patient, and more true !  
This is my Faith,---But then, It holds of Few.

*Gualtberus*, his Emotion, soon repress'd,  
Resum'd his Mind, and fortify'd his Breast.

" Wond'rous her Faith, (He commun'd with his

" Wond'rous her Love, if free from female Art !  
[Heart]

" To bear submissive, such repeated Wrongs,

" That Temper, rarely, to that Sex belongs !

238 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA : Or,

“ Nor ev’n to seek, from Words, or Sighs Relief!

“ Was It, Excess of Patience, or of Grief?

“ Again, not once reproach, not once withstand!

“ ’Twas great Disguise of Soul, or great Command!

“ Sustain such Weight of Woe with tearless Eyes!—

“ But, to the Covert, for Relief She flies.

“ There, doubtless, vents her Rage, and makes her

“ Echo, pays Sigh for Sigh, and Groan for Groan. <sup>[Moan,</sup>

“ Then, change the Scene, from Privacy of Place;

“ Yes, let her see her Rival, Face to Face.”

Thus, as He meditates the full Assay,

Arriv’d a Courier, and at Prime of Day;

To notice: “ That the Princely Youth and Dame,

“ With great *Pegasus*, from *Bulogna* came.

“ That, safely They had pass’d the Rocky Way,

“ And hop’d to reach Him with the Setting Ray.

Meantime, the Banish’d Wife, at early Dawn,

Unfolds her Flock, and follows to the Lawn;

To Where *Gualtherus*, loit’ring in the Course,

First stop’d, from Love, or Failure of his Horse.

There

There, lowly seated on the dewey Ground,  
She feeds her little Charge, that bleats around ;  
And plies the Distaff, that before her stands :  
Yet slow, the Widow'd, to the Virgin Hands.  
For, tho' the Twine with equal Care She wrought,  
Oft, wou'd intrude, an interrupting Thought ;  
Oft, wou'd her Spoul, her former State retrace :  
" Exalted Honor is a slipp'ry Place !  
" Tho' Palaces are high, and Cots are low ;  
" Here, lies sure Peace ! There, lies destructive  
" But Mind, is All to All, Mean or Sublime ! <sup>[Show !</sup>  
" Mind, is not to be chang'd, by Place, or Time !  
" In Time, or Place, Unblest, or Blest can dwell !  
" Can make a Hell of Heav'n, a Heav'n of Hell !"

Thus musing: For the Proof, *Gualtherus* sends,  
She, quits the calm Reflexion, and attends ;  
In Dress, a Shepherdess : The same, to see,  
As on her Marriage Day. She bends her Knee.  
But He, more slow to raise Her with his Hand,  
Nods and imparts his last severe Command.

240 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA : Or,

“ This Day, We celebrate the previous Rite ;  
“ *Griselda!* Know, our Nuptials crown the Night.  
“ Full, to Profusion is the Palace stor’d,  
“ With All, to deck the Bed, or cheer the Board.  
“ Yet much I fear, the Feast may wrong my Soul ;  
“ For Execution, mends, or mars the Whole !  
“ Tho’ gen’rous the Design, and large the Cost ;  
“ All Beauty is in Want of Order lost.  
“ Not One, thro’ all *Saluzzo*, can I find,  
“ That knows, so well, my Manner, or my Mind ;  
“ The Guests, or to distinguish, or invite :  
“ Put Show to Use, to Profit turn Delight.  
“ But You, long wont this Station to support,  
“ Can best advise, what suits the Prince and Court.  
“ Again exert the Talents You have shown,  
“ Display, at Large, the Splendor of my Throne ;  
“ Add ev’ry outward Instance of my Love :  
“ All, that I might omit, but must approve.  
“ But chiefly turn You to attend the Fair,  
“ Be That your Daily Thought, and Nightly Care.

“ ’Tis



" 'Tis True, this Rustic Garb may show Neglect;

" But well it suits your State, if You reflect,

" For, Pride of Dress, is sure a barren Curse ;

" E'er Fancy you consult, consult your Purse.

" This is my Will. Proceed, without Delay!

" And do the proper Honors of the Day!

" Much I rejoice (the mild *Grifelda* cries)

" That on my Faith your Confidence relies ;

" And hail the Cause, that brings Me to the Place,

" Where oft, at Distance, I may see your Face ;

" And oft your Voice, with due Attention, hear :

" Thus far I may indulge my Eye, and Ear!

" In honest Diligence, thro' servile Life,

" Pleas'd will I tend the Husband and the Wife,

" Affiduous, to prevent what She requires,

" Solicitous, to check my own Desires.

" So will I act (if but my Heart allows)

" As I ne'er knew your Flames, or heard your Vows."

Her Answer half defeated his Design ;

" Our Confidence You see--the Trust be Thine!"

He

He Said. She mingles with the Menial Train,  
 No Service She neglects, and spares no Pain ;  
 To grace the Bed, or magnify the Throne :  
 And forms a Feast more splendid than her own.  
 Intent, or to dispose, or to provide ;  
 But pains Her most, for What concern'd the Bride.

This done ; each noted Chief, each noted Dame,  
 She summons to the Feast ; so call'd, They came.  
 These She receives, as suits their Rank or Race ;  
 In vulgar Habit, but with noble Grace !  
 Arranging All, (for such her Lord's Desire)  
 From wealthy Citizen to landed 'Squire !  
 Equals in Place, not Worth ! From hardy Knight,  
 To Him, that never saw the Face of Fight !  
 From Peer that builds on Ancestors his Fame,  
 To Him, that founds his Title and his Name !  
 From learn'd and just Dispenser of the Laws,  
 To Him, that judges, by the Bribe, the Cause !  
 From Seer, whose Charity gives Health, and Ease,  
 To Him, that poisons, for the Sake of Fees ;

From

From Priest, of Life unstain'd, and Zeal sincere,  
To Him, of Holy Fraud, and pious Leer!

Enter, of Good and Bad, a mingled Crew.  
'Tis the true State of Things, or Old, or New!  
Virtue, and Vice, divides each mixt Degree!  
Such, was the World! And, such, will ever be!

But as her Care descends from Bow'r to Hall,  
All still inspecting, still amending All;  
Thus to a Maid of Rank, a Wife of Spirit:  
" Say, in her Meanness, see you any Merit?  
" I vow, by all the Virtue of my Pride,  
" Was I *Grifelda* sever'd from his Side;  
" Then cast, as Handmaid, to a second Wife;  
" Slave to his Will, yet trusted with his Life,  
" The present Bondage shou'd redeem the past,  
" Bridegroom and Bride, this Night shou'd be your  
[last."  
Meantime the Foremost of the Train alight;  
And fast the People pour'd to see the Sight.  
Close, and more close, the murm'ring Insects grew,  
Should'ring for Place, and crouding for a View.

And

244 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA : Or,

And much They prais'd the Show, and much the  
Ah! Who wou'd rest upon the Public Voice? <sup>[Choice.</sup>

*Grifelda's* Rise with equal Noise They hail'd;  
With equal Noise *Grifelda's* Fall bewail'd.

Be deaf, fair Stranger, to their senseless Cries,

Thus wou'd They treat thy Fall, Who treat thy <sup>[Rise.</sup>

“ *Gualtherus* is no Fool (the Croud confess'd)

“ Changing his Wife, but changing for the Best.

“ *Grifelda* wants no Merit to ingage,

“ But fairer, This, and of a softer Age.

“ *Grifelda*, was inur'd to brook Command,

“ And so may This, when molded to his Hand.

“ From her, what Heirs will spring the Throne to <sup>[Grace?</sup>

“ For She descends from some exalted Race,

“ The Brother comes, as Sample of the Line;

“ What Lineaments?---Majestic, and Divine!”

O Vulgar Souls, unstable and untrue!

Tir'd with the Old, transported with the New!

Turn'd by each Blast, as fickle as the Fane!

And faster than the Moon, Ye wax, and wain!

Hapless

Hapless the Prince, whose Ear, delighted, draws  
The Praise of Crouds, and swallows vain Applause;  
Whose Eye, transported, views the supple Round  
Of Courtiers, whom He trusts, yet fails to sound.  
His Ear may be misled, deceiv'd his Eye;  
Crouds can praise Folly, Courtiers, look a Lye.  
Safer, the Call of Virtue to pursue,  
That sep'rates Wrong from Right, and False from  
Tho' Crouds may change, unfaithful as the Wind! <sup>[True.]</sup>  
Can They depose the Monarc from his Mind?  
Tho' Courtiers from Allegiance may depart!  
Great is the Empire of an honest Heart?  
For inborn Worth, alone, knows no Controul,  
Fortune may change the State, not change the Soul.  
But Good, or Ill, as Man pursues or flies,  
So truly He may fall, so truly rise.  
'Tis Virtue gives Him in high Life to shine,  
Virtue, in low, is an unminted Mine.  
The Force of Each was in *Grifelda* shown,  
Great in a Cot, and humble in a Throne!

Thus



Thus, of the Many mad, the sober Few  
 Adjudg'd; Who lov'd the Old, and fear'd the New,  
 " And Fools, (They call'd the Number) to disown;  
 " For Good They know not yet, a Good long  
     In State, She enters now the Palace Gate, <sup>[known!]</sup>  
 And ent'ring is receiv'd with answ'ring State:  
 The Prince descending fast, to meet the Bride,  
 A Dame of high Condition join'd his Side;  
 Tongue of the Sex, She fastens on his Ear,  
 And thus express'd her fashionable Fear.  
 " A Shepherdess, She said, is such a Sight,  
 " It soils the Splendor of the Nuptial Rite;  
 " Excuse me, 'tis not my peculiar Plea,  
 " Here all the Sex in one Request agree;  
 " We make it our Petition and Desire,  
 " *Griselda* may redress Her, or retire;  
 " Nor stand, to Foreign Lords, a Mark of Sport,  
 " And Scandal to the Ladies of the Court.  
 Nought, to his Scheme, so cross as this Request.  
 He veil'd the Truth, and gloss'd it with a Jest.

Known

Known was the Dame, to love supreme Command,  
And hold the Bridle with a steady Hand.

" Ought to the Fair, it grieves me to refuse,

" But 'tis too Late, another Course to chuse.

" *Grifelda's* inward Merit well You know ;

" And what is Dress, but a fictitious Show ?

" Yet, seek You, why to Court thus rudely brought ?

" Young is our Bride, and should be mildly taught.

" This rural Garb is Humble, and is Plain ;

" In Public shown, this Maxim to maintain.

" Plain Truth, and humble Duty, suits a Wife ;

" An Emblem, for the Conduct of her Life !

I pass, as Trivial, nor the Tale prolong,

With Masque or Dance, with Minstrelsy or Song.

Nor, drawn by Fancy, deviate from the Way,

For kind Reception here, there grand Array.

I leave each Train, their Princes at their Head ;

The Youth and Virgin by *Pegasus* led :

Whom, long, *Gualtherus* fasten'd to his Breast,

And All, and Each, with kindred Warmth caress'd.

248 GUALTHERUS *and* GRISELDA: *Or,*

I dwell not on the Maid, in fresh Fifteen,

Whether array'd in White, Red, Blue, or Green.

Nor count how promising the Boy appears,

How Manly, measuring Half his Sister's Years.

Here glean, ye Bards, who barren Subjects chuse;

*Grifelda* will admit no wand'ring Muse.

Short of her Virtues, tho' thy Numbers flow,

Muse, keep Her First in Sight, tho' Last in Show.

Her copious Mind makes All her single Care;

But most She strives to serve, and joy the Fair.

Natives or Strangers, pleas'd and proud to see ;

The Whole She ranges, Each in his Degree.

The foreign Lords a due Surprise express,

So much, her Manner supersedes her Dress.

Nor stints her Tongue the Youth and Maid to raise

With Praise well judg'd; For they deserv'd her

Tho' not to Flatt'ry vile her Words descend, <sup>[Praise :</sup>

No flatt'ring Courtier cou'd her Words amend.

A gen'rous Flow of Soul, that scorn'd all Art!

Unfoil'd by Envy! Genuine, from the Heart!

Some

Some Worth it argues, a Friend's Worth to know;  
Virtue, to own the Virtue of a Foe.

Now, was the Hour, the Guests to entertain,  
And, One by One, preceeds the Household Train.  
Just, at that Season, e'er the Board was crown'd,  
While All prepar'd to join the Social Round,  
*Gualtherus* turns, *Grifelda* to explore:

" Seek Her," He said; But sent his Eyes before.

And where He spy'd Her busy'd in the Hall,

" Attend," He calls; And She attends his Call.

" *Grifelda*," (with Indifference feign'd He said)

" You see the Maid I chuse, and mean to wed,

" Speak (He continued with a Face of Sport)

" What think You of our Bride? Make just Report.

" How to her Form, how to her Worth, inclin'd?

" Pass Sentence, on her Person, and her Mind!"

She, mildly took the Word, and strait reply'd:

" Ill tho' the Relict might commend the Bride,

" No Malice of the Sex, no Spleen of Wrong,

" My Mind shall bias, or mislead my Tongue,

R

" Never

" Never these Eyes, in perfect Age, cou'd trace,  
 " A juster Form, or yet a fairer Face,  
 " Never, from Youth imperfect, heard these Ears'  
 " Thoughts so exprest, the Words of ripen'd Years  
 " Base is the Office, wrongly to debase;  
 " Lessen her Worth, I rise not in her Place.  
 " With Truth I praise Her, and without Design;  
 " Her Want of Merit, wou'd not add to mine.  
 " What, fully She exacts, I freely give;  
 " And may, Each blest in Each, securely live!"

Thus as She spoke; Warm grew the Virgin's  
 Rosy her Breast. She blush'd with modest Grace.  
 Then back retir'd, by her own Praise subdu'd.

*Griselda seiz'd th' Occasion, and pursu'd:*

" This, let Me add, by long Experience wifely,  
 " And once presume *Gualtberus* to advise.  
 " Judge ne'er so hardly of our Sex or Life,  
 " Ill Usage may pervert, not mend, a Wife.  
 " When from the Bounds of Reason Men depart,  
 " What, but the Force of Truth, and Faith of Heart,

" Retains



" Retains Affection, too severely prov'd ?

" Twice, think not, to be so indur'd, and lov'd.

" Try not, as me You try'd, this tender Maid,

" To summon more than Virtue to her Aid.

" If I, to Pain was senseless, deaf to Mirth,

" I owe It to the Lowness of my Birth.

" The Hand to Labour us'd, the Heart, to Care;

" Ills I had borne, and Ills cou'd know to bear.

" But She was nobly born, and fondly fed !

" In Plenty nurtur'd, and in Grandeur bred !

" Not like *Griselda* rais'd from low Degree ;

" By Thee to be debas'd, prefer'd by Thee !

" She, in the Trust of Innocence and Youth,

" Nor doubts your Constancy, nor fears your Truth.

" Soon wou'd She feel Distress, soon find a Cure ;

" She cou'd not well Adversity indure ;

" Well, cou'd She not, such Load of Grief, sustain :

" For Death wou'd soon arrive, and ease her Pain."

She spoke, from inward Ties of Kindred Blood,  
Or nobler Sympathy of Good to Good ;

252 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

Firm as a Column, stable as a Wall:

Her Grandeur more conspicuous by her Fall.

The gen'rous Answer, free from Spleen or Art,  
Rose inly on his Mind, and fill'd his Heart.

" Too far, too far, (In Extasy He cry'd)

" *Griselda*, was thy Wifely Virtue try'd.

" Resume thy wonted State, thy wonted Cheer

" Resume; nor think Me faithless, tho' severe!

" Enough have I assay'd thy Love and Truth;

" Assay'd, to riper Age from tender Youth;

" So well, as never Wife, in Pomp array'd,

" Or clad in Poverty, was yet assay'd."

He said, and by his Side *Griselda* plac'd,

Fast seiz'd Her in his Arms, and long imbrac'd.

As One, from cumb'rous Sleep disturb'd, She

Doubtful, if yet She wakes, or still She dreams;<sup>[seems,</sup>

If real Forms stand obvious to her Sight,

Or float the airy Shadows of the Night.

He noted her Confusion, Silence broke,

And gently press'd her Hand and kindly spoke.

" By

- " By Him, I swear, for Man that bled and dy'd,  
" Thou art my Wife, I seek no other Bride.  
" Worthy thy Praise the Maid I must agree ;  
" Must joy to praise Her,---For she comes from  
[Thee.  
" And Thee, in Her, thro' all her Form I trace,  
" May She, in Soul, but match Thee as in Face!  
" Thrice five Years told (if Love not blind these  
[Eyes)  
" States all the Difference that between You lies ;  
" In Age or Beauty. Oh ! that Heav'n decreed,  
" Her Virtue to thy Virtue might succeed.  
" Thy Daughter This, first Object of thy Care !  
" And That thy Son, *Saluzzo's* future Heir !  
" Assassin'd ? No ! Not such our base Intent.  
" Safe were the Infants to *Bologna* sent ;  
" To good *Pegasus* privily convey'd :  
" His worthy Consort rais'd the Youth and Maid.  
" That here They stand thus honor'd in thy View,  
" Say, to his gen'rous Heart, what Thanks are due ?  
" That, in thy View, thus polish'd, here they stand,  
" What Thanks are due to her reforming Hand ?

" A second Mother She, at our Desire,

" Conceal'd their Birth ; He prov'd a second Sire.

" My Motive, was Mistrust ; To own the Truth ;

" A stubborn Prejudice, imbib'd in Youth !

" Wedlock, I judg'd, a Station of Unrest ;

" I found no marry'd Pair compleatly Blest ;

" And for the Male, too hasty to decide,

" Plac'd ev'ry Error on the Female Side.

" I thought your Failures to our Faults gave Rise,

" Your Folly, Falseness, Levity, or Vice.

" Hence, the first Trial, hence arose the last,

" But well the Future shall amend the Past,

" Hence was you sworn a Life submit to lead,

" Nor swerve in Thought or Look, in Word or Deed.

" Hence, with our Daughter when constrain'd to

" I held your Duty, Indolence or Art. <sup>[part,</sup>

" Hence, was the Son propos'd. The Son resign'd:

" This Proof of Love, seem'd Cruelty of Mind.

" Hence, was You try'd in Self. With honest Shame,

" I own the Crime : *Griselda* was the same.

" But

" But fixt Suspicion is the worst of Woes,

" And Nought but Certainty cou'd bring Repose.

" Let Malice, (Room there is) our Conduct blame,

" Yet my Severity shall raise your Fame.

" And cou'd You penetrate my inmost Breast,

" There wou'd You find indelibly exprest,

" *Grifelda* fills my Heart. My Wealth, her Gain,

" My Bliss, her Pleasure. Her Distress, my Pain.

" And when most calm her Breast, serene her Eye;

" Here, many a Tear She caus'd, here many a Sigh :

" And let This mitigate, if not atone,

" Each Trial was not Thine, It was my own.

" And if thy Virtue thus exalted shine,

" Thine is the Treasure, the Discov'ry Mine."

She that cou'd bear Misfortune, that had borne,

Each Infant from her tender Bosom torne!

Cou'd to a Cottage from a Throne descend,

And, the great Bed, She had adorn'd, attend.

From Low to High, from High to Low re-tost,

Con'd see, what'er on Earth She valu'd, lost.



256 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

She that cou'd stand the last Contempt unmov'd,  
Yields to the Yielding of the Man She lov'd.  
Sinks at the Thought of either Child restor'd,  
Whose Loss in Secrecy She long deplor'd,  
Patient in Ill, in Injury resign'd!  
Here first She quits Equality of Mind.  
While, all her Wish in her Possession stood,  
Fast flow'd her Joy, like the returning Flood.  
The Swell of Passion rose to such a Height,  
'Twas painful Pleasure, and severe Delight.

Kind as He spoke, with Rapture and Amaze,  
Her Eyes She gives upon her Lord to gaze.  
And quits but to survey, with silent Joy,  
The lovely Maid and near-resembling Boy.  
All moves her, that She heard, or that She view'd;  
Strong on her Soul the Tides of Joy intrude.  
Fain wou'd her Tongue have open'd all her Breast;  
But there She felt, what cou'd not be exprest;  
Vain the Indecavor. For in Transport tost  
Her Voice was stopt, her Breath in Rapture lost.

Wound

Wound to Excess of Gratitude and Love,  
Her Pulse forgot to play, her Heart to move.  
No more her Form the vital Heat retains,  
Slow pass'd the Current circling in her Veins.  
The Dews of Death her trembling Limbs assail.  
Her Lips grew livid, and her Cheeks grew pale.  
Sounds, disproportion'd to her Thoughts, She hears;  
Unmeaning Murmurs echoing thro' her Ears.  
While misty Vapors, that in Fancy rise,  
Cloud the sole Objects that cou'd charm her Eyes.  
She faints. She falls. But, sinking to the Ground,  
He caught her in his Arms. The Court surround.

Ye tender Youth, in Love Unblest, or Blest,  
Imagination lose, and paint the Rest!  
Virtuous or Vitious, be your Course of Life,  
Feel you no Pain, for Husband or for Wife?

Reclining on his Breast, She pants for Breath;  
As pleas'd to die, since there She found her Death.  
He looks the Aid, He wants the Pow'r to give;  
As in her Life alone He wish'd to live.

A gen'ral Care the Courtly Train confess,  
 Joy mixt with Sorrow, Pleasure with Distress.  
 These fan'd her Bosom, Those her Head sustain'd;  
 While Death o'er Life a doubtful Conquest gain'd.  
 Of Art and Nature ev'ry Aid They bring;  
 The cool Refreshment of the limpid Spring!  
 The Juice of Herbs, that noxious Steams repell!  
 Of Shrubs the Virtues, elegant of Smell!  
 Of Drugs and Simples the salubrious Pow'rs!  
 Extract of Salts, and Quintessence of Flow'rs!

Thrice seem'd her Eyes, to ask the Cheer of Light,  
 Thrice seem'd to sink in everlasting Night.  
 And thrice He hail'd her as restor'd from Death,  
 Thrice wail'd her irrecoverable Breath.

At length She mov'd, and wildly gazing round,  
 First in her Care the pleas'd *Gualtherus* found;  
 Next, weeping o'er Her, joy'd the Maid to see,  
 And last the Boy, that trembled at her Knee.  
 The fond Assemblage pour'd, without Controul,  
 On her weak Sense, and mollify'd her Soul!

By Turns She seiz'd them, and by Turns She prefs'd,  
The Father and the Children to her Breast.

Adown their Cheeks the mingling Torrents flow,  
The Streams of Transport, not the Streams of Woe.

The sweet Contagion spred like tainted Air;  
From Youth to Youth it pass'd, from Fair to Fair.  
And many a gen'rous Heart breath'd many a Sigh,  
And many a Tear shed many a gentle Eye.

A Scene so sweetly sad, Who fail'd to feel,  
Must have an Eye of Flint, or Heart of Steel.  
Long Silence follow'd. 'Twas not Time for Speech.  
Looks best explain, what Words want Pow'r to reach.

Mirth to restore, *Gualtherus* soon began,  
Ironically grave; for that the Man.

" A Shepherdess is such an aukward Foil,

" The Splendor of the Feast She needs must foil.

" That She shou'd change her Garb, on me you

" And I agree; for 'tis the Plea of all.

" Ladies, with Joy I grant you this Request,

" Yes! Let our Wife retire to be re-drest.

" Nor

" Nor stand to Foreign Lords a Mark of Sport,

" Or Scandal to the Beauties of the Court."

Pleas'd, She retir'd. For well She read his Mind.  
A Train of busy Females flock behind.

And now more busy None of all the Train,

Than Some that witness'd Pleasure in her Pain;

But She that Office to the Bridal Maid

Assigns, nor wish'd, nor wanted, other Aid.

The Maiden Bride was charm'd with the Imploy,

The Sun, She knew, must set in Grief or Joy;

Late made no Stranger to her Sire's Intent:

And, as She griev'd, she joy'd for the Event.

Soon was She disarray'd, and soon attir'd,

For there lay All or More than Dress requir'd;

All that cou'd wish the Vain, or ask the Great,

In Aid of Beauty, or in Pride of State.

Nor senseless of their Value was the Dame;

Not senseless! when She thought, from whom they

Strait She return'd, Resplendent to behold; <sup>[came.</sup>

Of Silver was her Vest, her Robe of Gold.

The



The Hoards of Ages, that her Crown compos'd,  
Took Lustre from the Tresses they inclos'd.  
High in the Seat of Honor was She plac'd;  
The Seat her Virtue fill'd, and Beauty grac'd!  
The Guests, in Order rang'd, the Prince address,  
And with a noble Freedom op'd his Breast.  
A gen'rous Sense of Shame unloos'd his Tongue;  
The Wise and Brave dares say, that He was wrong:  
If Virtue errs, She errs against her Rules;  
'Tis ever the Reverse with Knaves or Fools:  
For wilful Faults, These mend not, or not own;  
Too weak to see, or wicked to atone!

" Friends! to the Self-accus'd be not Unkind;  
" Full dear I nourish'd this Distrust of Mind.  
" Painful the Trial, as severe the Test;  
" Had the Wife fall'n, the Husband was Unblest.  
" Be her's the Honor; mine be the Disgrace;  
" Yet shall my Choice beam Glory on my Race.  
" Nor Friend, nor Foe, that Act of Life shall blame;  
" That was my own; and is my Praise, not Shame.

" First,

262 GUALTHERUS and GRISELDA: Or,

" First, that beneath low Birth, and mean Disguise'

" Beauty and Virtue cou'd not 'scape my Eyes.

" Next, that I held Gentility of Blood

" Consists, in Scorn of Ill, and Pride of Good.

" Last, that I prov'd, Worth equal, whence it springs!

" From Cots of Swains, or Palaces of Kings!

" Remains there Ought, *Griselda* can desire?

" Yes, much is due to her neglected Sire.

" What must the Good *Janicola* have borne,

" To think his Worth the Object of our Scorn?

" What, not indur'd from Solitary Life?

" What, not expect the Father for the Wife?

" To give his innate Virtue full Support,

" Be mine the Care; He will not shame the Court.

" Here, shall he bear the Rank his Merit gains,

" Example, to our Nobles, and our Swains!"

*Pegasus*, by their mutual Virtues won,

Strait ask'd the blooming Daughter for his Son,

With which *Gualtherus* gracefully comply'd;

" If so my Son might call your Daughter Bride."

Ask

Ask You, how led the younger Race their Lives?  
Just as They shou'd. Mere Husbands and mere  
At Rule, the Women neither aim'd, nor broke <sup>Wives!</sup>  
Their Vow; with equal Neck They bore the Yoke,  
The Men accus'd Them not of Crimes unknown;  
But pard'ning lighter Faults, excus'd their own.

Thus found that mournful Day a blisful End;  
In Mirth and Revel the glad Night They spend.

Short seem'd the Hours of Converse and Delight,  
Ev'n a Day impertinently rose on Night.  
The coldest Maids, and wildest Youths confess'd,  
So to be Join'd, was, doubly so, be Bleft!  
With Licence, All their various Censure pass'd,  
Some the first Marriage prais'd, and Some the last.  
The Pair, of Last or First, no Difference make;  
Still, one in Soul, tho' sunder'd by Mistake,  
Each wrapt in Each, the Concord They improve;  
Their Life, was one long Day, of Harmony and Love.

*End of the Clerk of Oxford's Tale.*

## CONCLUSION

TO THE

## CLERK of Oxford's TALE.

I Mean not, by this Tale, I must declare,

What Husbands shou'd exact, or Wives shou'd  
 That Sense wou'd much my gen'rous Master wrong; <sup>[bear.</sup>  
 For thus *Petrarch* has meraliz'd the Song.

Ye Fair! Without Offence, let Truth be told;  
 This Age is not so strong as was the Old.  
 The Proof You cou'd not suffer, if you wou'd;  
 Too much for Human Flesh, and Human Blood.

Yet Patience is a Good, of Use in Life,  
 To Youth, or Maid! to Husband, or to Wife!  
 A Virtue, to no Sex, or Age, confin'd!  
 Our Author wou'd extend it to Mankind.

For

For if such Trials bore, such Hazards ran,  
 (Mere Force of Love!) a Woman for a Man;  
 Shall I presume to question his Decree?  
 By Whom, I am! In Whom, I hope to Be!

Vice luring, in the Way of Virtue, lies.  
 God suffers This; but tempts not: tho' He tries.  
 Go Wrong, or Right, 'tis your own Action still;  
 He leaves You to your Choice, of Good, or Ill.

Then chuse the Good! The Ill submissly bear!  
 The Man of Virtue is above Despair.  
 Safe, on this Maxim, with *Grifelda* rest!  
 That All, that fortunes, fortunes for the Best!

*Chaucer*, who close attended, from the Ground  
 His musing Eyes up-rais'd, and look'd around.

' Spare me (He cry'd) if not our Host oppose,

" One Word of Epilogue, before you close.

" So rare a Coin, are true *Grifeldas* grown,

" Scarce Two are found, in any Country Town.

" And bold the Man, not wife, that dares ingage

" To warrant One, in *London*, in an Age.



- " For put the Current Cash to full Assay,  
" The Gold is mix'd with Brass; a bad Alay!  
" And shou'd it stand the Touch, or cheat the Eye;  
" Trust me, at last, 'twill rather break than ply.  
" Hence, let our Pray'rs the Wife of *Bath* besfriend,  
" Whose Life, and Sect, ye Pow'rs of Love defend.  
" Still may her Tongue the sov'reign Rule maintain;  
" And never may her Hand relax the Rein.  
" Free may she live, in undisturb'd Delight,  
" All Day in Revel, and in Bliss all Night.  
" Nor will the Modest Scholar think me bold;  
" (Who with much Decency much Truth has told)  
" Or will with me, as with mine Host dispense;  
" (For no light Humor takes from solid Sense)  
" If this Advice I add, to poise the Scale:  
" A merry Moral suits a serious Tale.  
" Dead, is, *Griselda*! Wisly Patience, Dead!  
" Both bury'd in one Tomb! Both laid in Lead!  
" For which, ye Husbands, lend attentive Ear;  
" Hear me, for it concerns You much to hear.

" Let

- “ Let None, I warn You, None on Pain of Life,  
“ In Search of a *Grifelda*, tempt his Wife.  
“ If half so far, her Patience You assail ;  
“ You try Her, to your Loss, for She will fail.  
“ And You, ye Wives of Spirit, above Wrongs,  
“ Let no such mean Example nail your Tongues.  
“ Let, never, moral Poet of your Age,  
“ Fill, with your Duty, one Romantic Page.  
“ Be Pleasure, your Pursuit! Be Pow’r, your Aim!  
“ Make Nothing, of your Virtue, or your Fame!  
“ Of Truth and Honor, laugh at All he writes ;  
“ Vain Talk for Children! Nurs’ry Cant of Sprites!  
“ Thus taught ; no Merit in Compliance place!  
“ Meanness of Soul, think, Modesty of Face!  
“ It matters not, how tender, when alone,  
“ The Part’ner of thy Life. It shou’d be known!  
“ Known to thy Friends! nor yet shou’d That  
“ To Strangers be it known! Might I advise. [suffice.]  
“ And now imprint this Lesson on your Mind,  
“ The Benefit, by Practice, you will find.

- " Trust not the Marriage Venture to his Hand ;  
 " Freight He the Frigate, Thou the Sail command !  
 " Why, to his blustry Oath, such Def'rence paid ?  
 " The Husband, why thus dreaded and obey'd ?  
 " Arm'd, tho' He stood, compleat in plated Mail ;  
 " The Arrows of thy Quiver shall not fail.  
 " Thy crabbed Eloquence supplies a Dart,  
 " That, ent'ring at his Ear, shall pierce his Heart.  
 " If You have Beauty, strait alarm his Love.  
 " Be ever on the Dress, and on the Rove.  
 " At Home wou'd He remain ? Abroad then roam !  
 " Then, wou'd He roam Abroad ? Remain at Home !  
 " Make it your Rule, to see, and to be seen ;  
 " Abroad in Humor ! And at Home in Spleen !  
 " Touch but his Jealousy, You must prevail !  
 " Yes ! You will make him couch like any Quail !  
 " The Pow'r of Form, if Nature has deny'd ;  
 " Tho' not his Love, You may alarm his Pride.  
 " Be open of your House, to sup, or dine,  
 " Bring Company ; for All he has is Thine !

" To

- “ To Fiddlers, Priests, Play’rs, Poets, give or lend !  
“ Money shall win Thee many an humble Friend !  
“ Thy Man, may fume, and fret, and rave, and rail !  
“ But touch his Honor, and You low’r his Sail.  
“ For You, the Masculine, to Labor bred,  
“ When menaces his Hand, correct his Head.  
“ If Nature gives the Sinew and the Frame,  
“ Same as the Pow’r, why not the Use the same?  
“ Whene’er your With, is wilfully withstood,  
“ Exert your Talent ; it will do him Good.  
“ Stick to your Point ! Again withstood, withstand !  
“ There is no Logic, like a heavy Hand.  
“ But for the Delicate, the Weak in Fight,  
“ The Rich, the Great, the Tender, the Polite !  
“ Be furious as a Tiger ! or if That  
“ You cannot compass ; vixin as a Cat !  
“ By Tongue reclaim this Rebel to your Will !  
“ Loud as the Clapper of a Drudging Mill !  
“ Fast as the Flier of a well-order’d Jack  
“ From Morn to Night keep one continu’d Clack !  
“ And

“ And went He twice as loud, and twice as fast,

“ Speak what He will, like Echo, speak the last.”

The worthy Student, to Scholastic Pride

A Stranger, smil'd; but not a Word reply'd.

Not so mine Host the fly Conclusion bore,

Roundly he spoke, and horribly he swore.

‘ Not much that Turn is suited to my Mind,

‘ As quoth the Clerk, it leaves a Sting behind.

‘ But I had rather than a Tun of Ale

‘ Our Dame, at Home, had heard this courteous

‘ Forsooth, to say, was her Domestic Life

[Tale.

‘ Expos'd, no tame *Grifelda* is our Wife.

‘ But 'tis the daily Burden of my Song,

‘ If Things will not go Right, let 'em go Wrong.

‘ To Common Sense I owe these Golden Rules.

‘ None will suspect I learn them in the Schools.

‘ Patience I court; But Patience oft is frail.

‘ And, if He curs'd not, *Job* himself cou'd rail.

‘ A heavier Plague He never bore in Life;

‘ A very Heap of Vices is our Wife.

“ Tho



- ' Tho' Poor and Low; yet far from Fond or True.  
' And of her Tongue, She is an errant Shrew.  
' Still joys her That, which contradicts my Will ;  
' But if it must be so, be it so still.  
' Yet, here my Mind more fully to disclose,  
' Reveal'd to Friends, and spoke beneath the Rose;  
' Wou'd some kind Priest but forge the Papal Bull,  
' *Annull*, shou'd be my Instant Song, *Annull*.

*The End of the Third VOLUME.*



THE CLERK OF ORCHARD TALE

The Poet and I too; yet in some Tongue or Time

And of her Tongue, she is an earnest Shew.

Still joys her That which contradicts my Will

But if it might be so, be it to fill.

Yet here my Mind more fully to disclose

Reveal'd to me beneath the Role;

Wond'rous to me the Royal Hall,

Whence should the my long, Ah, Ah.



The End of the Third Volume.



